



H. Gravelot del.

J. Pine Sculp.



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A N
E S S A Y

Mr. Pope's ODYSSEY.

I N
FIVE DIALOGUES.

By Mr. SPENCE,
Fellow of New College, and Professor of POETRY
in the University of OXFORD.

— Each finding, like a friend,
Something to blame, and something to commend.
Mr. Pope's Miscel. Vol. I.

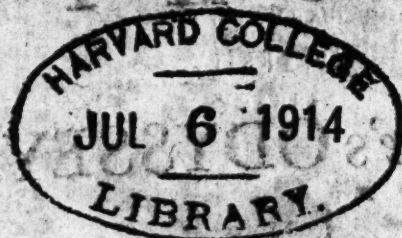
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THE
P R E F A C E.



HERE is no Person more
Odious than the Man who
makes himself greatly Eminent. It is a sort of tacit
Reproach on the rest of the Species:
and every one feels his own meanness
the more sensibly, when he looks to-
ward those exalted Genius's, who have
gained a Superiority over the rest of
mankind. This may make it obvious
to imagine, that the following Dia-
logues are partly designed as Invectives;
and produced chiefly from that Blind-
side in Self-love, which makes Men
willing to derogate from every one,
who has Merit enough to provoke, and
Fame enough to make others think
themselves lessen'd by the over-growth
of his Character.

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Tho' this reasoning be exceedingly true in general, it ought to be consider'd, at the same time, that any dislike to the Eminence of others naturally arises, only among such persons, as are got into the same paths of Fame. The Gentlemen of the Sword cannot bear to have others rise over their head; the Men of Genius look maliciously on a prevailing poet: But *Pope*, I presume, never envied *Marlborough* the Battle of *Blenheim*, any more than that Hero envied him his Translation of the *Iliad*.

'Tis for this Reason I might almost say, that I cannot envy Mr. *Pope*. So far at least I am unbiass'd; I can hear the Applauses, which are given that Great Man; I can admire the Passages, which contribute to the deserving them: But I cannot be uneasy at those, or detract from these, out of any prejudices arising from this Passion. Give me leave to say farther, that in reading that Work of his, which occasion'd this Essay, no one could be more delighted, than I was, in several parts of it.

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it. Many Beauties I saw in it; and I imagin'd I saw some Faults. In some particular Conversations on this Head, I have found myself indifferent in the Case: and now I have here flung the Thoughts on both together, I hope, with some degree of Impartiality. But if some things should be blamed without sufficient Reason, or others commended too highly, and in a manner disproportioned to what they deserve, I submit each to the many better judges, who may happen to meet with these sheets. I ask pardon for any errors in them: I beg to be set right.

Prefaces, I think, are the only places in which a man may be allowed to talk freely of that worst of subjects, Himself: I hope no body will deny one the use of so aukward a Privilege; and shall therefore go on without any farther Apologies.

To many it may perhaps seem arrogant to find fault at all with so distinguished and so noble a Poet as Mr. *Pope*. Indeed here are some things proposed as faulty from his Translation; but

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they are only proposed: the World is to judge of them. Where I have been mistaken in any of these Points, it is not for want of a due deference to the merits of this Writer; but from a shortness of my own sight. On the contrary, if any such Criticisms happen sometimes to be right, the Eminence of the Poet will be so far from being a reason against them, that it makes any true Cautions the more proper, and in some sense perfectly necessary.

Besides: The learned World, as I take it, have ever allowed a Liberty of thinking and of speaking one's sentiments. That serene Republick knows none of the distance and distinctions which custom has introduced into all others. There is a decent familiarity to be admitted between the Greatest and the Meanest Person in it. This has often raised a Thought in me, which has something wild, and, at the same time, something very agreeable in it, when indulged to any degree. 'Tis in Relation to the peculiar happiness of Men of Letters; in that they
can

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can sit down in their closets, and converse with the greatest Writers of every Age, or of any Nation ; and that in as much freedom and intimacy, as their nearest Friends could ever use toward any of them, when living. What an illustrious Assembly is there on those Shelves ? The Courts of *Augustus*, *Lewis* the Fourteenth, or *Charles* the Second, never beheld such a frequency of great Genius's, as stand round a Man in his own private Study. How large an Happiness is it for a Person to have it in his Power to say at any time, That he is going to spend the Afternoon with the most agreeable and most improving Company, he will chuse out of all Ages ? If he is in a gay Humour, perhaps with *Horace*, and *Anacreon*, and L^d *Dorset* ; or if more solid, either with *Plato*, Mr. *Locke*, or Sir *Isaac Newton*.

'Tis this ease of access, and the liberty arising from it, which constitute and preserve the felicity of the Republick of Letters. The meaner sort, which compose it, are all Free-voters ; and

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may speak their real Opinion without reserve: at the same time the Characters even of the greatest and first Men in it, must be form'd and establish'd on this openness of Judging, and that freedom of Observation.

But waving whatever has been said of this Liberty in the Learned World, most people will be apt to help one to an Excuse of another kind: for most, I think, are very ready to agree, that Mr. *Pope* is only the Master-hand in this Translation. Be that as it will, Mr. *Pope* has recommended the whole with his Name; He gives the finishing stroke to every thing: and the Dialogues speak of him, as if he were really the Author of the whole. It wou'd have been a confused thing, and often not practicable, to have spoken at every turn to the right Person. This has occasion'd several applauses of the Poet, which may seem too high for a stranger: But there is so good reason to think, that the other Gentlemen engaged are persons of establish'd Characters in the Poetick World; that af-
ter

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ter all, those Compliments perhaps may still be allowed to stand as they are: I hope they are never wrought too high for Mr. *Pope* himself; and I believe they may generally be spoken very justly of his Seconds in the Work.

One Word more, and I have done. As to the manner of these Dialogues; 'Tis the old *Platonick* way, which *Cicero* brought from *Greece*, and used so happily in the *Latin* Tongue. It has had its Successes too among the Moderns: *Fontenelle* will always be read with the greatest Pleasure, where he has follow'd it; That Writer is peculiarly happy in all his Dialogues, of whatever sort; and, in general, may be said to talk as well with Pen and Ink, as any Man in the World. Mr. *Dryden* and Mr. *Addison* have recommended it among us by their Example. Indeed the method itself is more capable of variety; and hath something more of Action and Reality in it. Besides that the common way among us of merely keeping up a Discourse between two blind Names, is perhaps not very Com-

A 5 mendable :

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mendable: the Persons of the Dialogue in such Cases are generally like those Actors, who have no Character in the Play; and who only come into Talk upon the Stage. They have no more distinction, no other marks by which you may know one from another, than the two *Capital Letters*, which usually stand for them. It is much otherwise, and much better, among the Persons introduced by the Writers in the other method: whose Great Names I use only to authorize this Manner of Dialogue, as that is all which I can pretend to imitate in them.





A N
E S S A Y
O N

Mr. *Pope's* ODYSSEY.

E V E N I N G I.

PHANTIPHAUS manag'd his Affairs so as to get this Winter sooner, than usual to the Country-seat of his Friend *Philypsus*. It is there that he passes his time, when ever he can clear himself from the hurry of Business, in a retirement every way agreeable; and in a full enjoyment of those Pleasures, which attend on a particular Friendship, in an open and improving Conversation. The Conversation there does not run in the present polite way of saying and saying
A 6 nothing;

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nothing ; when alone, they usually fall into some Points of Learning ; and as both of them are particularly fond of Poetry, their Disputes turn more frequently on that Subject, than any other. Indeed their differing in Sentiment can scarce be call'd Disputes ; for whenever their Thoughts do not meet, each of them shews a diffidence in his own Opinion, and a willingness to submit to the Judgment of his Friend.

It is by this means that they fall into each others Sentiments, more than cou'd well be expected from Men of so different a Turn. The enlarged Genius of *Phylsus* always led him to dwell upon the most beautified Parts of a Poem with the greatest Pleasure ; while *Antiphaus*, who has a very clear Head, and has given much into a strict way of thinking, is taken most with just Descriptions, and plain natural Ideas: The one was so possess'd with the Pleasure which he felt from fine Thoughts and warm Expressions, that He did not take a full Satisfaction in low Beauty, and simple Representations of Nature ; the other, on the contrary, had such an Aversion to Glitterings and Elevation, that he was distast'd at any the least appearance of either. If the latter was perhaps too much prejudic'd for the Ancients, from the Purity and Justness, which

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which we find in most of their Works; *Philypsus* had his Foible too, and was sometimes caught by the Flourish and Colouring of the Moderns. In a word, if *Philypsus* wou'd sometimes condemn a Point as low and mean, tho' in reality proper enough, and naturally express'd; *Antiphaus*, in his turn, might happen now and then to blame a Passage which requir'd a good degree of Ornament, as being too glaring and artificial.

Among several other Topicks, one Evening, they happen'd to fall into a discourse on Mr. *Pope's* new Translation of the *Odysssey*. As they both found Beauties in that Piece agreeable to their particular Tastes, they had read it over with a great deal of Pleasure: however *Philypsus* was the Person who admired it the most.

"There are some Lines, says he to *Antiphaus* (pointing to the *Odysssey* which lay before them) there are some Favourites of mine in that Poem, which you must not look upon with your usual severity. Indeed, *Antiphaus*, you shou'd be a little more sensible to the Flame and Spirit of a Writer, who is evidently Our present Laureat in Genius, and the most enliven'd Translator of the Age."

"I will very readily allow what you say of that Great Man, returned *Antiphaus*; and shall always pay a deference to

to your more lively taste of the Fine and Sublime in Poetry; but you must give me leave to dissent from you in some Particulars: if I do not agree with your Sentiments, in relation to several Lines and Passages of that Translation, 'tis perhaps because I fall so much short of you, in your *inward sense* of the high and elevated Beauties of Language."

"As I cannot imagine that to be the reason, says *Philypsus*, I beg to hear those Particulars you talk of; I am persuaded, several of the Passages, which I have observ'd you to be less taken with in reading the Translation, will upon a closer view appear to be really Beauties; to tell you the truth, I long to make a Convert of you; and beg you would be full and large in communicating whatever Remarks you have made on this Performance. The Evenings are long; we have sufficient time upon our Hands; and I know not how we can pass it away more agreeably."

Antiphaus paus'd for some time, and seem'd to be taken up in recollecting his Thoughts on this Point: at last taking a Tablet out of his Pocket, "Since you desire it, (says he) I will shew you what Observations I made as I went over the Work; they are the Thoughts which struck me at first sight, and many

EVENING I.

5

“ of them will perhaps appear little and trifling.”

You will allow me, I believe, in the first place, That Lines very good in themselves, may be bad when considered as a Translation. The aim of a Translator is to give us the *Spirit* of the Original; and where the Original is just, the very *manner* is to be observed. By the Manner, I would not intend the express words, or the mere turn of a Period; but that the Imitation ought to be easy, simple, and unadorn'd, where-ever the first Writer uses either of those Styles with Judgment. You are well acquainted with that plain, humble manner of *Homer*, which is more particularly kept up by him in the *Odyssey*: And as much as I admire several parts in this Translation, I cannot but think there are places in it, which differ from the Manner of *Homer*, without sufficient reason for a Change. The Poet, in several parts of that work, seems to me to have let fall some Lines that are forced; some of too much flourish, and ornament; and a few, even swelling, and unnatural; where the Original is with good reason plain, and natural, and unadorn'd.

Where we admire the Simplicity of *Homer* with Justice, we cannot avoid blaming the want of it in his Translator. 'Tis intimated in one of the
(a) Notes,

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(a) Notes, *That* no Reproach has ever fall'n upon *Homer*, in relation to his sinking too Low, or being too familiar; *That* as to these Particulars he preserves an universal Justness: and that there is not any one place in his Poem, which can be justly censur'd upon this account. If so, a Translator of *Homer* has no occasion for raising any thing, beyond what it is in the Original; If he follows his Master, it is sufficient: All additional Flourish and Glitterings, where we should meet with the plain and the familiar, are at best so many beautiful Excrescencies.

There is one Case, which seems more particularly to lead this Translator into a glaring Style: 'tis almost ever to be found in the Descriptions of *Day*, of *Light*, and of the *Morning*. 'Tis true, these are subjects which in themselves may require some brightness in the language; but there is a great difference between giving one Light, and dazling one's Eyes. Beside the conformity to the Original, there is another certain and easy way of judging, whether the Brightning in these or any other Points, be proper or not: that Light, we may be sure, falls in a wrong manner, or an undue proportion, which does not make the thing more visible.

(a) B. 14. 1.

There

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There are of these Descriptions, *Philyp-*
us, which seem both to refine too much
upon the Original, and to err from this
Rule. Did you ever observe those lines on
one of the most agreeable Images in the
World, The break of Day? they are in
the beginning of the third Book: If you
will give me leave, I will read them to
you.

The *sacred* Sun, above the Waters rais'd,
Thro' Heav'n's *eternal*, *brazen Portals* blaz'd;
And wide o'er Earth diffus'd his *cheering* Ray,
To Gods and Men, to *give the golden Day*.

Several of these Expressions seemed to
me at first sight to take from the Nature
and Simplicity of the Description; and
when I turn'd to the Greek, I found those
very Expressions to have no Foundation
here. 'Tis the same Case in the follow-
ing Lines:

- (a) Soon as the Morn, *in orient Purple drest*,
Subarr'd the Portal of the roseate East, &c.
- (b) —When the Morning-Star with early Ray
Flam'd in the front of Heaven, &c.—

You will find these short Sketches in
Homer to be much more simple and natu-
ral: I leave it to your Judgment, whe-

(a) Translat. Book 4. V. 411. Orig. *δ'*. 306.

(b) B. 13, 112. *ν'*. 93.

ther they appear better with these Colourings, or not. To add one Instance more of the same thing: Is it more proper for *Circe* to tell *Ulysses*, That he should stay that Night with her, and *set sail the next Morning*? or to give him leave to

(a) Spread his broad Sails, and *plough the liquid way*,
Soon as the Morn *unveils her Saffron Ray*.

I must own, says *Philypsus*, this would have been more fit for the Description of a Voyage, than for a Speech: in a Place too, when we only find Orders given for setting Sail at such a time.

To me, proceeded *Antiphaus*, there seems to be too much of this Spirit of Beautifying in several other Points, beside those Topicks we have been talking of: as where he calls the Nobles of *Phœacia*,
(b) *A radiant Band* of Noblemen; and where he introduces *Helen* with (c) *a Gale of rich Perfume breathing before her*. If *Homer* mentions *Cups of solid Gold*; in the Translation

(d) The Gold gives *lustre* to the *purple Draught*:

(e) And in the *dazling Goblet laughs* the Wine.

(a) B. 12, 35. μ'. 24. — ἀμα δ' ἡοὶ φαίνομένηφι
Πλευσεσθ'

(b) B. 6, 306. ζ'. 257.

(c) B. 4, 158. δ'. 121.

(d) B. 1, 188. α'. 142.

(e) B. 3, 601. γ'. 472.

You

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You cannot but observe, by the way, that the Original here is designed to signify the *real* intrinsic Value; while only the *outside* and more glittering Circumstances are what the *English* dwells upon entirely: but to go on. — The Horns of a Bullock are in this new Language, (a) *Budding Honours*; and those of a Ram (if I am not much mistaken) (b) *translucent Crescents*. *Pallas* is well known to have had *Blue Eyes* given her by the Ancients; now it is

(c) *Celestial Azure brightning in her Eyes.*

This heightning of things, by a severe Critick might be thought blameable; and indeed whenever it interferes, where the Passions ought to be touch'd, it certainly is so in an higher degree. The Reader is delighted when, after a melancholy Scene, he sees *Penelope* reviv'd by a Message from the Gods; and (d) secretly enjoying the Satisfaction of her Soul; but what Passion, what Idea has he, when instead of this he is told of her (d) *Heart's dilating, and glowing with florid Joy?* — Paint to him that unhappy Princess in her Distress,

(a) B. 3, 493. γ'. 384.

(b) B. 4, 107. δ'. 85.

(c) B. 1, 408. α. 314.

(d) B. 4, 1096. δ'. 840.

retiring

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retiring *silently*, and crying herself to sleep; only shew the Circumstances, and the Reader must be moved: Does her Behaviour and her Sufferings strike him so forcibly, when he finds it embellish'd into

(a) — *Echoing Grief, and Silver-streaming Eyes?*

But however these Passages may seem to be weaken'd by the finery and luxuriance of the Language, this certainly is not so much the fault of the Translator, as of the Age: We give much into an airy way: If a Verse runs off smooth, 'tis no matter for depth and clearness; and as the Ancients valued Thoughts more than Sound, we seem to be taken with Sounds more than Thought. To speak out, we are got into an idle manner of Versifying; and if Mr. *Pope* sometimes falls into it, we are not so much to blame him for those Particulars, as to wonder, that he does not do it more frequently, in so general a debauch of Taste among us.

Hold (interrupted *Philypsus*) if You go on at this rate, You will seem only to be got into the old Cant of running down our own Times: I do not believe, but that I cou'd name some Poet among us, to answer any of those who flourish'd in the

(a) B. 1, 462. a. 363.

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Augustan Age. As to the present Point, we rarely hear of any such thing as *Transfation* among them: In *Satyr*, we have the great Names of *Rocheſter*, *Dryden*, and *Oldham*: (not to mention the new kind of *Satyr*, introduc'd among us by *Butler*; or that by which *Dr. Garth* got ſo much reputation.) In *Critical Poems*, there are, You know, two or three very good, beſide that incomparable Piece by *Mr. Pope*, all to weigh againſt *Horace*. As for *miſcellaneous Subjects*; think of *Mr. Pope* again, and of *Cowley*, *Waller*, and *Prynor*, to mention no more of them. In the *Epick*, as *Milton* may diſpute the Laurel with either *Virgil*, or *Homer*, and in *Dramatick Pieces* of either kind, we have Writers that indubitably exceed any of the Ancients.

Antiphaus was not inclin'd to enter into a diſpute of this nature. "I was only ſpeaking, ſays he, of our preſent Taſte of Poetry, and the prevailing manner of thoſe writers who are now upon the Stage. As to this, *Philypſus*, give me leave to ſay, that the language of our Writers, as well as the practice of the World, is much infected with a Deſire of appearing Smart and Pretty. I think 'tis *Mr. Locke* obſerves, that the humours of a People, may be learnt from their uſage of words. This ſymptom of the diſeaſe is very ſtrong in the preſent Caſe: thus to ſay that a verſe is

prettily

prettily turn'd, is the highest commendation among the French Criticks : as a *fine* Scholar, *polite* Literature, and the *Belles Lettres* are the leading expressions, when we would speak of Learning in the best sense. And I appeal to you, who are so well acquainted with all our Poets, whether their practice, in particular, does not fall more and more into the *Prettinesses*, we have been complaining of. We may partly judge of this from some Lines in the Best of them, the Writer whose Works lie before us : I was just going to give you a few more instances of it, from the *Odysssey*.

Is there any Figure so much abus'd by the Moderns, as what they call the *Antithesis*? They run it into a downright playing upon Words. *Cowley's* Poetry could not live without it : *Dryden* uses it frequently, in his Translation of *Virgil*; and was ridicul'd, You know, on that head by the late Duke of *Buckingham*. I have observ'd with pleasure, that Mr. *Pope*, in his Translation, very much avoids this little beauty, which the other affected so excessively ; yet I have a place before me, where one of this kind has slip't from his Pen : It runs thus. (He is speaking of a Stranger's Arrival at the Court of *Penelope*, disorder'd so much by the riot of the Suitors.)

—When,

— When, to taste her hospitable board,
 Some Guest arrives, with rumours of her Lord ;
 (a) And these *indulge their want*, and *those their war*;
 And *here the tears*, and *there the goblets flow*.

Pardon me, says *Philypsus*, there you do not seem to do the Translator Justice; the Figure is countenanc'd by *Homer* himself: You see here is an *Antithesis* in the Original. "That (answer'd *Antiphaus*) seems rather to be a Contrast, to set the riot of the Suitors in a stronger light: But call it what you please, it is only single there, whereas you see it multiplied, and worn to Rags in the Translation. This overdoing a Point is observable in many other Cases, as much as in the former; and in some, is carried on to a degree which borders upon the *Forc'd*, and *Unnatural*.

Telemachus, bursting into Tears at the Name of his Father, endeavours to hide his Sorrow from *Menelaus*, who was then talking with him. *Homer* says only, that (b) *Menelaus observ'd him*; which words we find drawn out into this Couplet:

The Conscious Monarch pierc'd the coy disguise,
 And view'd his filial love with vast surprise.

(a) B. 14, 416. ξ'. 376.

(b) B. 4, 154. δ'. 116.—νόησε δέ μιν Μενέλαος.

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For an humble natural Description of a Tripod (or Caldron) set upon the Fire, I wou'd recommend you to the following lines :

The Flames *climb* round it with a *fierce embrace* ;
(a) The fuming Waters *bubble o'er the Blaze*.

But above all, in my Opinion, are these on a Person tired and quite spent :

— *Lost in lassitude lay all the Man,*
(b) Depriv'd of Voice, of Motion, and of Breath ;
The Soul scarce waking, in the Arms of Death.

Or these :

(c) Ye Gods! since this *worn frame* reflection *knew*,
What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view?

Wou'd you imagine, that all which countenances the latter in the Original, is a Passage in *Ulysses's* Speech after his Shipwreck, in which he intimates, *That he had not bath'd for a considerable time*?

I find it so (says *Philypsus*) and own the Lines to be somewhat forc'd and unnatural ; indeed those you have repeated seem generally to draw too near to that Cha-

(a) B. 8, 474. δ'. 437. Γάστριν ἢ τεῖποδος πῦρ ἀμφοτέρω, δέσμετο δ' ὕδωρ. (b) B. 5, 585. ε. 456.
(c) B. 6, 262. ζ'. 220. — δὴρὸν ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐστὶν ἀλοιφή.

racter. But I cannot conceive by what means they sound so harsh to me at present: when I read the Piece, there was scarce a Line of them which gave me any offence. — Yes; it must be by your tearing them from the Body of the work, that they now seem not so agreeable. Really, *Amiphaus*, this is not fair usage of an Author: You rob them of their Order and Connection; and 'tis thence that they perfectly lose the Beauty, which they had in the Whole. Very true, reply'd *Amiphaus*; the warmth of Reading, the thread of the Story, and a general tunableness in the Verse, will carry a Man on strangely; and may sometimes cheat him into a false Pleasure. But then it is for this very reason, that I shou'd think, the justest method of forming a judgment on Particulars is, to consider them apart. However, let us try it for once in a more entire Passage, than any of the former. 'Tis where *Minerva* tells *Ulysses* that she will transform him into the figure of an Old Man; that he may view the posture of his Affairs unsuspected and unknown. The Lines in *Homer* may be thus read into English.

Od. v. 397. to 403.

“ I will make you (says that Goddess
“ to the Hero) entirely unknown to all

B

“ Men;

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“ Men ; the beauty and smoothness of
 “ your Skin shall be taken away, your
 “ Limbs bent, and the Hair of your Head
 “ turn’d grey. I will then fling a Garb
 “ over you that shall make you frightful
 “ and odious to those that see you. All
 “ that flame and life in your Eyes shall
 “ be lost ; I will so far deform them that
 “ you shall look contemptible to all the
 “ Suitors, to your own *Penelope*, and to
 “ your Son, whom You left yet an In-
 “ fant in your Palace.”

You know that Mr. *Pope*, in comparing
 some Passages in the Prophecies of *Isaiab*
 with the famous Eclogue of *Virgil*, turns
 the latter into Prose : If we follow that
 Example in the present case, his Transla-
 tion of these Lines runs thus :

Od. 13. V. 453, to 464.

*It fits thee at present to wear a dark dis-
 guise, and walk secret, unknown to the Eyes
 of Mortals : For this my Hand shall wither
 every Beauty, and every elegance of Form
 and Face, Spread a bark of Wrinkles over
 thy smooth Skin, turn the auburn honours
 of thy Head hoar, disfigure with coarse
 attire every Limb, and extinguish all the
 Fire in thy Eyes ; add all the decays of Life,
 and all the wants of it, estrange thee from
 thy Own, thy Son and thy Wife ; every light
 shall*

shall turn from the loath'd object, and the blind suitors scorn their destruction.

Give me leave to go out of my way a little, to try the same Experiment on a Single Passage from the *Iliad*, which is flourish'd, and set off in an extraordinary manner. It is in the Nineteenth Book, where we have a poetical account of a fine Breed of Horses: The Original runs thus:

IL. V, 221, 225.

“ Three Thousand Mares graz'd these
“ Meads, with their young Foals run-
“ ning by them; Boreas was enamour'd
“ of them as they fed there, and turning
“ himself into the shape of a fine black
“ Horse, accomplish'd his desires: Of
“ this breed, were twelve of the Colts.”

Mr. Pope's Translation, (only allowing equivalent Expressions to blind the Rhimes) runs thus:

Iliad, B. 20. V. 262, 270.

*His spacious Pastures bred three Thousand
Mares, and three Thousand Foals fed beside
their Mothers: Boreas enamour'd of the
sprightly train, conceal'd his Godhead in
the Locks of Hair that flow'd over his
Shoulders; he neigh'd to his Loves with
dissembled Voice, and cours'd the dapple
Beauties o'er the Meadow: Twelve others*

of unrival'd fort sprung hence, swift as their
Mother Mares and Father Wind.

This, if over-wrought, is the more
blameable, because the matter is carried
very far even in the Original, and so is
the less capable of being stretch'd any
farther. Mr. Pope, in his note upon the
Place observes, *That Homer has the hap-
piness of making the least Circumstance consi-
derable; and that the plainest matter shines
in his dress of Poetry.* It is true, it shines
sufficiently in that. Some brightning is
necessary in Poetry: but an excess of it,
Philypsus, may dazzle, or may blind our
Eyes; it can never assist, or delight them.

By comparing these Passages, You will
see that which I intend; the difference
of Manner in the Ancient and Modern
Poetry: In the latter we find Expressions
added, which seem to be added for beau-
ties, and which in reality perhaps only
turn the Plainness and Strength of the
Original, into the *Fine* and the *Artificial*.

Upon *Philypsus's* acknowledging that
he thought the Point too much labour'd,
and the Translation unequal; Yes, says
Antiphaus, Mr. Pope himself seems to be
sensible of it, in the former passage from
the *Odyssey* in particular: for soon after,
when the same Description is repeated in
the (a) Original, he gives an entirely new

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Turn to it in his (b) Translation: And I believe, upon hearing the Lines, you will be of opinion that (excepting a word or two) it is render'd with a better grace and with more Justice, than we find in the former.

[Wand:

She spake. then touch'd him with her powerful
The Skin shrunk up, and wither'd at her Hand:
A swift Old-Age o'er all his Members spread,
A sudden Frost was sprinkled on his Head.
Nor longer in the heavy Eye-ball shin'd
The Glance divine, forth beaming from the Mind;
His Robe with Spots indelible besmear,
In Rags dishonest flutters with the Air.

Mr. *Pope* without question is happy in a great share of Judgment, as well as Vivacity and Spirit in Writing: but it is next to impossible, in so long a Translation, especially as it is in *Rhyme*, not to give sometimes into Sound and Ornament; when, to crown all, the Vogue of the World goes so strong for both. Do not ask, whether I should desire to see both of them banisht out of Poetry; far from it: Expressive Sounds are of use in the most natural; and a Variety in the management of them, is necessary to keep up Attention in the Reader: That, and Ornament, is what sets Poetry above Prose. All I wou'd say is this, that Sound

(b) B. 13, 497.

is not sufficient where we might expect Sense; and that in *humble* Passages, in *natural* Descriptions, or in moving most of the *Passions*, additional ornaments are so many blemishes. Dressing up the expressiveness of *Homer*, in such fineries, is much the same as if one shou'd throw a very gay modern dress over the *Hercules Farnese*, or any of the most Nervous Statues of the Ancients.

But You will allow Ornament, where the subject will bear it, and where the Original leads the Way? — In a translation (answer'd *Antiphaus*) it is proper perhaps, only in the latter Case; but allowing it in both, it should not be overwrought in either. Too much Finery is always Affectation: and I wish our Writers at present were not so generally given to *elevate and surprize, and all that*, as Mr. *Bayes* calls it.

The running into this excess so much, is what has unfinew'd our Poetry. 'Tis in Poetry, as it is in Buildings; the being vastly Studious of Ornament does not only take away from the Strength of the Work, but is a sure token of a vitiated taste in the Designer.

You are always blaming the Modern Refinements, says *Philypsus*; but will you not allow that this taste of the Age is a sufficient justification at least of Mr. *Pope*,
in

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in those cases, where he complies with it; — We must *write* so as to please the World, and *speak* so as to be most easily understood: Custom will often wear away the propriety of things of this Nature; and as for the propriety of language, that depends upon it entirely. I allow, to use your own thought, that a profusion of Lace and Embroidery wou'd be a disguise upon an Old Hero; but they are so far from being improper, that they are becoming on the Heroes of our Age.—

They may become the Heroes of our Age (replied *Antiphaus* smiling) perhaps on a far different account: there is another Character now wove into and blended with that of a Soldier, to which these things are very agreeable: How many are there of these Heroes, as you call them, whose Courage reaches no farther than their Sword-knot, and whose Conduct is taken up wholly in their Dress? But consider a Man barely as a Soldier; think of him in the midst of some warm Action, and these little Ideas of him will disappear: Then it is *that* posture, *that* pressing on the foe, *that* grasping of his Sword, *that* fierceness in his Eyes, *that* serenity and *that* eagerness on his countenance, which strike us wholly, and take up all our attention. Yes, *Philypsus*, if you view a real modern Hero in a true

light, those fineries do not fit well upon him : and I think, I never saw any thing more truly ridiculous, than the Piece we were laughing at the other Day, in your Picture-Gallery. — Good Heaven! The Duke of *Marlborough* in the heat of an Engagement, with a full-bottom'd Wig, very carefully spread over his Shoulders!

But to return to the present taste in Poetry.——If this Corruption of the Age cou'd excuse a Writer for what he composes now, must it be carried down as far as *Homer's* Days? must his Heroes love, and talk, and fight *a-la-mode*? must his strong, sententious lines, be set to the new polite airs of *Handel* and *Bononcini*? Yet, were what you wou'd alledge of any force, it wou'd carry the matter thus far; and the whole *Iliad* and *Odyssey* ought to be enervated down to the present taste. No, whatever may be allow'd to any of the proper genuine productions of this Age, it ought not to make an inroad upon all others; let *Homer's* energy and *pathos* be violated as little as is possible: Nature ought to rule in his Works, and those of the Ancients; as ornament, and surprize, and elevation, have in their turn the Empire of the Modern World.

You see I begin to shew the old heat, that this subject (I think) always betrays me into. — I beg pardon, *Philypsus*; and will

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will attend more to what I am about for the future.—I shou'd have given you some instances of this *Elevation* from the translation before us. *A-propos*, What a glaring description of a Sword have we in the Eighth *Odyssy*?

— Whose blade of Brass displays
A ruddy gleam; whose hilt *a Silver blaze*;
 (a) Whose iv'ry sheath *inwrought* with curious pride,
 Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side.

Homer says, that *Hermione* was as beautiful as *Venus*; this is low and humble in comparison of the New *Hermione*,

(b) On whom a radiant Pomp of Graces wait,
 Resembling *Venus* in attractive state.

Where a prodigy is sent to the *Ithacensians* in Council, Homer says that they were struck at the sight of it, and revolv'd in their Minds what it might presage to them: this is render'd after the following manner:

(c) The wond'ring rivals gaze with cares oppress,
 And chilling horrors freeze in ev'ry Breast.

How mean is it, and how much like prose, to tell us, that *Penelope* heard the

(a) B. 8, 437. *S'*. 403.

(b) B. 4, 19. *S'*. 14.

(c) B. 2, 183. *β'*. 156.

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mirth of the Suitors? To elevate this sufficiently, You must say

(a) *The shrilling Airs the vaulted Roof rebounds,
Reflecting to the Queen the Silver Sounds.*

This false way of *animating* Poetry, as no doubt many will be pleas'd to call it, grows particularly prejudicial and absurd in any case, where the Passions are to be rais'd in the Reader, or described in the Persons of the Poem. Where we wou'd move Pity, in particular, nothing is (b) *more odious than a shew of Eloquence*. Nature has provided a Sympathy in our Souls; She has put a bias into our Temper, that inclines us forcibly to Compassion; and we shou'd (c) leave her to her own work in such points, without any of the impertinent assistances of Art.

The lines you have just repeated, interrupted *Philypsus*, are such as I cannot admire: but I think you carry the point too far against Art in general. Is there not the greatest Art required in moving the passions? Why then have *Cicero*, and

(a) B. 1, 425. a. 328.

(b) Odi reum cui esse disertio vacet. *Quintil. Lib. 11. c. 1.*

(c) Quicquid meris adjicietur affectibus, omnes eorum diluet vires, & miserationem securitate laxabit. *Quintil. Instit. Lib. 11. c. 1.*

all the Criticks of old, given us so numerous rules in this Case? Yes, reply'd *Antiphaus*, great Art, or rather a great Genius, is very necessary toward any excellence this way. But what I have said was intended not so much against the Use of Art, as the *Appearances* of it. 'Tis the greatest of Arts, to conceal the Art you use; and to have it very evident, is the greatest of Blemishes. The Criticks, and *Cicero* in particular, speak with the utmost plainness against any thing of that kind. Where the passions are to be touch'd, apparent art is apparent fraud; so that here particular care should be taken, that nothing be over-wrought.

'Tis on this account, that when you compare the following lines with the Original, you will not, I dare say, be overfond of them:

The Soul of Friendship to my hope is lost;
(a) Fated to wander from his natal coast.

He said: chill horrors shook my shiv'ring Soul;
(b) Rack'd with Convulsive pangs in dust I roll.

And that entire Passage of *Penelope*,

Rolling Convulsive on the Floor, is seen
The piteous object of a prostrate Queen.

(a) B. 4. 248. S'. 182.

(b) B. 4. 726. S'. 539.

*Words to her dumb Complaint a pause supplies,
And breath, to waste in unavailing Cries:
Around their Sov'reign wept the menial Fair,
(a) To whom she thus address'd her deep despair, &c.*

I wish this false elevation and profusion of Ornament does not carry the Translator, in some few Cases, into downright Fustian. (b) *A Man's being lost in Lassitude, and a Soul scarce waking, in the Arms of Death*, look'd very much that way. Do You remember where he talks of (c) *Princes on Princes roll'd*, and (d) *Gods being heap'd on Gods*? Or how in another place we are told, that

(e) ———— *The Pharian Isle
Fronts the deep Roar of disemboing Nile?*

You know the Character of some of Sir John Falstaff's Attendants, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*; a sort of Men, who are industrious in talking hard Words; and whose *Humour*, is to be unintelligible. One wou'd almost imagine the humble Account of shutting a Door, in the end of the First *Odyssey*, to be copied from those illustrious Originals.

(a) B. 4, 957. d'. 721.

(b) See p. 14.

(c) B. 11, 151.

(d) Obs. 27. on B. 11. Ver. 383.

(e) B. 4, 480.

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— — — — — The Door *reclos'd*;
 The Bolt, *obedient* to the silken Cord,
 (a) *To the strong Staple's inmost depth restor'd,*
Secur'd the Valves. —

I own (says *Philypsus*) I cannot but give up those lines to you, and several of the other you mention'd before. The first lines, when you repeated them, I took to be the very worst you could pick out of the *Odysssey*: But I know not how it comes about, you rise gradually in your demands upon me; and are got insensibly from lines in that piece, which were forc'd and too much beautified, to things unnatural, and shocking. When I thought of making a Convert of you to an entire admiration of this translation, I fancy, I was much mistaken; at this rate, you will turn the Tables upon me: and to tell you the truth, I cannot but confess, that the Poet has, in some Cases, fallen into each of the faults you mention.

In some Cases doubtless (reply'd *Antiphæus*) this Translation is not to be commended: I take it to be as good, as any Translation of *Homer*, into *English*, and in *Rhyme*, cou'd be expected to be: In all probability, we might safely add, that no

(a) B. I. 555. α. 441. — Θύρη ἐπέσσε κορώνη
 Ἀργυρέη, —

other

other Writers of the Age cou'd, in the whole, have perform'd such a task so well. But a perfect Piece of this kind cannot be expected: If *Homer* himself is allow'd to Sleep a little, his Translator certainly may Nod sometimes. —

One thing I observ'd (interrupted *Philypsus*) in the lines you have repeated; that the faultiness of several of them was owing to an Excess in one of the greatest Beauties of Poetry, I mean, the *Metaphors* too frequent in them. I observ'd the same (says *Antiphaus*) as I was collecting these little Remarks: it occasion'd my using a particular Paper for that single point: If it did not grow so late, I wou'd shew it to you; but——No, let us have it now, cry'd *Philypsus*: I never knew any thing of yours too long, and if it be that Paper in your Hand, I shou'd think it much too short; were it not for my concern for the Poet, and the desire I have of finding as few Faults in his Writings as possible.

Metaphor, says *Antiphaus*, is certainly the most universal enlivener of Poetry. At the same time that it adds to the dignity of Verse, it gives it an agreeable variety; together with a power of Painting out all its Images, in the boldest and strongest manner in the World. 'Tis this which animates those objects, which must
other-

otherwise be still and unaffected : it flings every thing into Motion, Life, and Action: by this the Arrow is *cager* and on the Wing, by this the Sword *thirsts* for blood, and the Spear *rages* in the Hands of the Warrior. *Metaphor* raises each subject out of the heavy narrative way : it creates new Beings ; it represents the passions of Men, and even mere *Names*, as animated and embodied ; and shews them in the posture and attitudes of Agents. Thus when the Battles are going to join, you see *Rage stalk* amidst the Combatants ; pointing with one *Hand* to the Enemy, and in the other, shaking the *Torch of War*. By this, the Valleys and Mountains *rejoice*, when *Peace* once more *spreads* her downy Wings, and *Plenty* descends from Heaven upon the *happy* climate. 'Tis *Metaphor* which makes the Woods and Caves *answer* to the voice of the Poet, and the murmuring Stream *compassionate* his complaints : 'Tis this which makes the *Nile know Caesar* ; and the *Sea*, its present *Monarch*.

If Mr. *Pope* manages this powerful Figure frequently to the best advantage, sometimes he happens not to be so happy in the use of it. The force of *Metaphor* is to make things strong, clear, and sensible : any confusion destroys the very end of it ; and yet a little inaccuracy may occasion

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occasion gross errors this way. Sometimes what is just with the *Figurative*, may disagree with the *Proper*: sometimes again, an idea which might stand with the *proper* expression, will be inconsistent with the *figurative*. A misapplication either way is very obvious, and yet it gives a jar to the Ideas, and makes the sense of a line to be perplexed and in confusion.

It sounds but oddly to talk of a Person, and of his Picture, without any manner of distinction: To say, that *the piece, drawn by Sir Godfrey Kneller for Mr. Pope, is an excellent Poet, and Writes with the greatest Command imaginable*; Or, that *Mr. Pope is a very good piece, and his face very well colour'd, tho' he is but just recover'd from a fit of Sickness*; either of them wou'd carry a mixt incoherent sense with them: This I take to be partly the Case in the following Lines:

(a) Now from my *fond embrace* by Tempests torn,
Our other *Column of the State* is born;
Nor took a *kind adieu*. —

(b) They *sweep Neptune's smooth Face*.

(c) Declining, with his *sloping Wheels*
Down *sunk the Sun*. —

(a) B. 4, 962. δ'. 727. Παῖδ' ἀγαπητὸν ———

(b) B. 9, 210. ι. 180. Πολὴν ἄλα τύπτον ἱερτομοῖς.

(c) B. 2, 437. β'. 388. Δύσετο Ἥλιος.

To

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To say *the God of Light* was driving his Car, down the Steep of Heaven (as Mr. Pope somewhere expresses it) is metaphorical; To say *the Sun is setting*, is proper: but shou'd one say, *The Sun is setting with sloping Wheels*, This wou'd be neither Metaphorical, nor Proper; nor cou'd it raise any thing in the Mind, but a confusion of Ideas.

Thus:

[burl'd]

(a) Hear me, Oh Neptune! thou whose Arms are From Shore to Shore, and gird the solid World.

I think, Neptune has the luck of it; for 'tis the same Deity, that in another place makes just such a Figue, as I have seen him in some Mortlack-Hangings.

(b) The raging Monarch shook his azure head,
And thus in secret to his Soul he said, &c.

(c) This said, his Sea-green Steeds divide the Foam.

Such confusions of the Metaphor and the Proper have a great resemblance to that absurdity of mixing Fable and Reality together, which appears so grossly in Mr. Dryden's *Hind and Panther*; and which was the very thing, that provoked Lord

(a) B. 9, 618. l. 528. ΚΛῦσι, Ποσειδάων γαιήοχε—

(b) B. 5, 365. l. 285.

(c) B. 5, 480. l. 380.

Halifax and *Mr. Pryor* to ridicule that Piece, with so much humour and good sense. What those Authors have said on that subject, may give a Side-light to what I mean in the present Case. I think the Book is behind you. If you will be so good as to reach it down, I'll just read that Passage in their Preface to you, where they are speaking of this odd Mixture. O, here it is. It begins with mentioning the antient Fabulists. " They wrote
 " (say they) in Signs, and spoke in Parables : all their Fables carry a double
 " meaning : The Story is one and entire
 " the Characters the same throughout ;
 " not broken, or changed, and always
 " conformable to the nature of the Creatures they introduce. They never tell
 " you that *the Dog*, which *snapt* at a shadow, lost his *Troop of Horse* ; that would
 " be unintelligible. — This is his (*Dryden's*) new way of telling a Story, and
 " confounding the *Moral* and the *Fable*
 " together." After instancing from the *Hind and Panther*, he goes on thus.
 " What relation has the *Hind* to our *Saviour* ? or what notion have we of a
 " *Panther's Bible* ? if you say, he means
 " the *Church*, how does the *Church feed*
 " on *Lawns*, or range in the *Forest* ? Let it
 " be always a Church, or always the Clo-

" ven-

ven-footed Beast, for we cannot bear his shifting the Scene every Line."

I had almost forgot to tell you, that upon consulting the Original there was no *Metaphor* at all to be found, for either of the Lines, I last repeated from the *Odyssæy*. We have now *Metaphors* perpetually; the Translator is vastly fond of them. I need not say that an Excess this way is very blameable; you know the Criticks speak against it in a high strain, and one of them goes so far as to say, that this (a) *Figure, when frequent, obscures the Piece, and fatigues the Reader; when continual, 'tis no longer a Poem, 'tis all Allegory and Enigma.*

As a false Mixture of the proper and the figurative confuses the sense, the joining *Metaphors* together which do not agree, makes it still more dark and perplexed. These are like (what they call) *Medley-Pieces*; a huddled kind of Pictures, which shew a Variety of Objects, flung together without any order or design: As that in the beginning of *Horace's Art of Poetry*, they join the Limbs of one Creature to the Body of another; and

(a) Frequens (*Metaphora usus*) & obscurat, & tædio complet: continuus vero in allegoriam & ænigma exit. *Quintil. Instit. L. 8. c. 6.*

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confuse all the properties and circumstances of an Action.

If the Poet be not very careful, he may by these means tie not only things improper, but even contrarieties, together. Do not the following Lines border on this? To me the *Metaphors* in them seem to be improperly united.

From *Elateus*' strong Arm the *Discus* flies,
And *sings* with *unmatch'd* Force along the Skies :
And *Laodame* whirls high, with dreadful sway,
(a) *The Gloves of Death*.—

At the same Time, nothing can be more Proper and Narrative than the Original in that place. Again :

(b) From his Eyes pour'd down the tender Dew.
(c) But *Anticlus* unable to controul,
Spoke loud the languish of his yearning Soul.

In these the Action is describ'd in words, that import a *violence* ; while the Act to be express'd, is plainly something *still* and *gentle*.

Nothing is more known in relation to

(a) B. 8, 140. ῥ'. 130.

Δίσκῳ δ' αὖ πάντων προφέρεισάτ' ἦεν Ελατρεὺς,
Πύξ δ' αὖ Λαοδάμας ———

(b) B. 11, 486. λ'. 390.

——— θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυον εἴσω.

(c) B. 4, 388. δ'. 286.

the

the Metaphor, than that rule of Cicero's;
 (a) That it shou'd be so modest, as to seem to
 have been handed into the place of the pro-
 per Word, not to have forc'd its Way thither:
 it shou'd fall into it in a free, voluntary
 manner. Otherwise it will make the sense
 dark and intricate; and that absolutely
 destroys all the use of it; for as Metaphor
 should be the (a) greatest Light and Ornament
 of Language, Obscurity is the most absurd
 thing, and the most to be avoided in Metaphor.

I desire you would give me your Sen-
 timents on a certain passage, in this view.
 What do you think of the Images in the
 following Line?

They cuff, they tear, their Cheeks and Necks they rend.

Do you remember whom 'tis spoken
 of? Really, says *Philypsus*, I cannot well
 determine, whether it is spoken of *Men*,
 or of a couple of *Beasts* fighting. — Of
 neither, answer'd *Antiphaus*: 'tis used of
Eagles in the (b) *Odyssey*; and in the (c)
Iliad, of a couple of *Vulturs*.

There is an Observation arising from
 this, which ought to be consider'd, in

(a) Verecunda debet esse Translatio, ut deducta esse
 in alienum locum, non irruisse; atque ut precario, non
 vi venisse videatur. — Est hoc magnum ornamentum
 orationis, in quo obscuritas fugienda est. Cicero de
 Oratore, Lib. 3.

(b) B. 2, 179. (c) *Iliad* 16, 524.

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transferring *Metaphors*: it may be said, that the word *Cheeks* in this Verse, is justified by the Original. Custom, *Philippus*, is the great Rule of Words: and what is easy in one Language, will not bear in another; because usage may have soften'd in one, what in the other is yet harsh and unwarrantable. This is evident from the very Word in debate. Thus we use *Cheeks* in English of some Creatures beside Men; the Term is so far familiarized, and sounds very well: Yet to talk of the Cheeks of a *Pheasant*, or the Cheeks of a *Vultur*, will by no means sound the softer for its prevailing in those other particulars.

However, this is agreed on all hands; that a *Metaphor* is not to be used, unless it gives a greater light, and makes the thing more sensible to us. Are the Borrow'd terms, in this Case, *more* expressive than the Native? Nay, do they give you *as clear* Ideas, as the Native would? Do they give you as clear, where the Poet talks of (a) *asswaging Thirst with a generous Vintage*, or of *Polyphe'me's* doing the same thing with a (b) *Milky deluge*? What do you think of an (c) *Ozier-fringed Bank*, of a *Voice* (just heard) (d) *wounding*

(a) B. 6, 298. (b) B. 9, 353. (c) B. 14, 533.
(d) B. 5, 515.

the Ear, or of the Sea's being call'd the (a) howling desert of the Main? In the Notes to the *Odysssey*, 'tis (b) question'd whether the nodding of a Mountain be a natural Image; should not you be apt to think too, that a Mountain (c) shaking the Forests on his sides, is fitter for an Earthquake, than a Metaphor? What sort of Idea have You of a (d) well-fought Wall, or a (e) thrice-ear'd Field? In a Word, have You any Idea at all, of *Jove's* (f) rearing a Tempest, or of the (g) whistling Winds waking the Sky?

Philypsus consulted his own Mind all along as these points were offer'd; and endeavour'd very fairly to discover, whether the Images were as clear and evident, as they ought to be: He knew that the great use and (g) beauty of Metaphor, was to give Light and Perspicuity to a description; to cloath Words (as he us'd to say) with Substance; and to make Language visible: But as, upon this View, he cou'd not answer fully what had been produc'd, he was willing to evade it as much as he cou'd. These Instances, says

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|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| (a) B. 4, 748. | (b) B. 14, 510. | (c) B. 13, 400. |
| (d) B. 5, 395. | (e) B. 5, 159. | (f) B. 5, 391. |
| (g) B. 3, 213. | | |

(h) *Modus nullus est florentior; nec qui plus luminis afferat Orationi. Cicero de Oratore, L. 3.*

he,

he, (turning to *Antiphaus*) tho' few for so large a Piece, when laid together, are apt to incline one's judgment to the prejudice of the Translator: it will not be fair to look only on the worst side of him; we owe it to Justice, and to the Excellencies of that great Man, to give one Evening to his Beauties, as well as this to his Defects. — Be so good then (interrupted *Antiphaus*) as to undertake that part for the next: You know me so well, I need not assure you, that I shall be as much pleas'd with hearing the Beauties, as I am uneasy in repeating the Faults of this Writer.

After some other discourse, *Antiphaus*, going for his own apartment, and reflecting upon what had pass'd between him and his friend, took occasion to observe; "How impossible almost it is for the
 "greatest Genius not to fail sometimes,
 "in an undertaking of this Nature: and
 "how unavoidable it will be for the
 "Reader, (in a Poem generally well
 "wrote) not to be led away from ob-
 "serving those faults, by the vast Power
 "of Ornament, the easy Fluency of the
 "Verse, and his Engagements to the
 "Beauties of a favourite Piece." *The best*
qualified (added he) *will thus err, whenever*
they write for Fame; and the most judicious
will be thus deceived, when they read for
Pleasure.



A N

ESSAY

O N

Mr. *Pope's* ODYSSEY.

EVENING II.



BETWEEN company and business, it was some time before *Philypsus* and *Antiphaus* could get an Evening to themselves; the latter had waited for it with some impatience; and did not fail, pretty early in it, to remind *Philypsus* of his promise. I long, says he, to see your Remarks; such a method of viewing a Poem, is something like the way of our favourite *Vertot* in writing History: we have the material Parts of it, without passing thro' the dead Lines, which go toward the Narrative; or the less significant Passages, which are to fill up the Chain of Events. You must not expect any great

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Matters, answer'd *Philypsus* : 'Tho' I have had longer time than we talk'd of at first, it has been sufficient only for collecting some of the scatter'd Beauties of this excellent Translation.

Some of the Lines which you repeated the former Evening, shew'd that the Greatness of his Genius had led Mr. *Pope* sometimes into an Excess ; if things can be too much beautified, that fault does certainly belong to him. In a few lines, I confess, he discovers a greater love of Ornament, than is becoming. This is the fountain of all the several Peccadillo's which you observ'd from his writings ; whatever there is to be found in them, either too *glaring*, or *forc'd*, or *figurative*, or too much *elevated*, may fairly be accounted for this way. You, Sir, produc'd some Passages, as I remember, under each of these Characters : But how pardonable is it, for so exalted a Genius, to run sometimes into an excess of Ornament ? And how admirable for such, to excel often in the just, handsome, natural *Manner* ?

Is not almost the entire (a) *Episode* of *Menelaus* and *Proteus* particularly just, and beautiful ? What can have a greater share of Nature, without any excesses,

(a) B. 4. 493. to Verse 776.

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than the Adventure with (a) *Nausicaa*?
How justly are the Passions preserv'd in
(b) *The Descent into Hell*; and before, in
all the Speeches (c) of *Circe* and *Calypso*?

Tho' these Passages are generally of
too great a length to bear repeating in
a single Evening, you will indulge me
with the reading some of the most finish'd
Parts of them.

The whole *Episode* of *Menelaus* and
Proteus is particularly well wrote; but
the things chiefly to be admir'd in it are,
the *Metamorphosis* of *Proteus*; — His
Speech on the unhappy Curiosity of Men;
— the account immediately after, of
the Deaths of *Ajax* and *Agamemnon*; and,
above all that enliven'd Conclusion, in
Relation to *Elysium*, and the future Hap-
piness of *Menelaus*. You remember the
various Transformations of *Proteus*; and,
I believe, will allow them to be exceed-
ingly well express'd:

A Lion now, he curls a furgy mane;
Sudden, our bands a spotted Pard restrain;
Then arm'd with tusks, and lightning in his eyes,
A Boar's obscene shape the God belies:
On spiry volumes there a Dragon rides;
Here, from our strict embrace a Stream he glides;

(a) B. 6.

(b) B. 11.

(c) Books 5 and 10.

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And last, sublime his stately growth he rears
(a) A Tree, and well-dissembled foliage wears.

The Lines are extremely good, says *Antiphaus*; but I had a Thought came into my Head, that possess'd me, all the time you were reading them: I cou'd not forbear thinking, what an happy Contrivance it would be in the Managers of the *Old House*, to bring this Deity upon the Stage, in the same manner, that he appears in these Verses. Such a Performance wou'd set their Character in the most eminent Light: They wou'd infallibly get the start of their ingenious Rivals; and poor *Doctor Faustus*, and his *Dragon*, wou'd no longer be the highest Entertainment of the *Beaux Esprits* of this Age.

I am got into another Part of the Poem, (says *Philypsus*) which might serve, in some measure, to arm their Rivals of *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, against so formidable an Undertaking. There are Passages in the *Descent into Hell*, capable of furnishing out a great deal of the *Wonderful*, and *Surprizing*, in this way. But to return: can any thing be more Pathetick, than this whole Book? especially, the

(a) B. 4, 615, to 622.

latter part, when *the Heroes* come to make their Appearance. Tho' I am always lost in the Variety of Beauties, which we find in it; I must single out the Speech of *Agamemnon*; and read (at least) the Conclusion of it to you:

When War has thunder'd with its loudest Storms,
 Death thou hast seen in all her ghastly forms;
 In duel met her, on the lifted Ground,
 When hand to hand they wound return for wound:
 But never have thy Eyes astonish'd view'd
 So vile a deed, so dire a Scene of Blood.
 Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
 Glows in our Veins, and opens ev'ry Soul,
 We groan, we faint; with Blood the dome is dy'd,
 And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tyde—
 Her breast all gore, with lamentable cries,
 The bleeding innocent *Cassandra* dies!
 Then, tho' pale death froze cold in ev'ry vein,
 (a) My Sword I strive to wield, —but strive in vain.

Surely nothing in Nature can be conceived of greater Strength and Emotion, than this Circumstance. We see the Hero weltring on the Floor, all cover'd with Blood, and in the last agonies of Death. It was then, that he heard the Cries and Shrieks of the Daughter of *Priam*, pursued by the Traitors, and stabb'd to the Heart by the barbarous *Clytemnestra*: expiring as he was, he en-

(b) B. 11, 528. λ. 423.

deavours to raise up his Arm, and at last gets his Hand upon the hilt of his Sword; which he had strength only to grasp, with a look full of Rage, Compassion, and Revenge. Methinks, *Antiphaus*, I see him now expired, and dropt upon the Floor; but tho' expired, there is still that Rage and Passion in his Countenance; he still grasps his Sword, and seems to threaten the Traitors and the Adulterers with his looks.

I know nothing finer (says *Antiphaus*) than these last Efforts of dying Heroes. They affect the Soul wonderfully: And the weakness of their Body, which will not permit their acting at such times, in my Opinion sets off their Courage, and their Desire of Action, in the strongest Light imaginable. There is nothing unnatural in this; tho' indeed it follows Nature to its last Pitch: The best Historians, as well as the first Poets, make use of such Circumstances very finely; and I remember Instances of it, (a) in *Livy* and (b) *Sallust*, that carry this Mat-

(a) Etiam quos vires sanguisque desereret, ut intra vallum hostium caderent, nitebantur. *Liv.* vol. 3. p. 145. per *Hearne*.

(b) *Catilina* vero longe a suis inter hostium cadavera repertus est, paullulum etiam spirans, ferociamque animi, quam habuerat vivus, in vultu retinens. *Sall. Bell. Cat.* juxta finem.

ter as far as (a) *Virgil* or *Homer*. But some Moderns, as usual, stretch it so immoderately, that they go beyond nature; and the Moment it is so, it must be ridiculous. Some serious Writers (as well as some humorous ones) have carried this to the last Excess. It would be very well if their Heroes only threaten'd in Death, but they must die (b) away, without being at all the Weaker: others (in the heat of Battle, you may be sure) forge that they are (c) kill'd, and so keep on fighting: like *Strada's* Soldiers, who after they are cut in Two, (d) survive themselves; and fight on with that half of their Bodies, that is left them; to revenge the other, which was knock'd on the Head an hour or two before.

Such things as those, when offer'd seriously (answer'd *Philypsus*) are not Blemishes in a piece; they are downright falsities; mere outrages against Truth, as well as common Sense. Nothing can be invented more ridiculous. They are like the incomprehensible Lyes of Sir *Jaku Falstaff*; and put one in mind of his fight-

(a) G. 4, 526. *Æn.* 9, 444.

(b) Minacciava morendo, e non languia. *Tasso, Cant.* 19. St. 26.

(c) Il pover' huomo, che non sen' era accorto, Andava combattendo, ed era morto. *Berni.*

(d) Dimidiato corpore pugnabant sibi superstites, ac perempta partis ultores. *Strad.* Dec. 2. Lib. 2.

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ing with Percy an hour by Shrewsbury Clock, after that Gentleman had been kill'd before very heartily by Prince Henry.

On the contrary ; *Homer* is as great a friend to Truth and Nature, as he is to Poetry : He knows how to raise every thing, as far as it will bear ; he has always a Command of whatever is proper to be said ; and, which is yet greater, always understands when he has said enough.

But we forget ourselves, *Antiphaus* : this Digression has carried us so far, that if we do not soon go on with this Speech of *Agamemnon's* which occasion'd it, we shall not know where it left off. After that pathetick account of his Death, and the barbarity of his Queen, he proceeds :

Nor did my traitress Wife these Eye-lids close,
Or decently in Death my Limbs compose.
O Woman, Woman ! when to ill thy Mind
Is bent, all Hell contains no fouler Fiend.
And such was mine ! who basely plung'd her sword
Thro' the fond Bosom, where she reign'd ador'd !
Alas ! I hop'd, the toils of War o'ercome,
To meet soft quiet and repose at home ;
Delusive hope ! — O Wife, thy deeds disgrace
The perjur'd Sex, and blacken all the Race ;
And shou'd posterity one virtuous find,
(a) Name *Clytemnestra*, they will curse the kind.

(a) B. 11, 540. λ. 433.

The turn of Expression in this, is much more lively and passionate, than the language of *Homer* himself. As you cannot value any delays, where we meet with such improvements; I am sure you will give me leave to read the Speech of *Ulysses* just after: That I mean, in which he gives *Achilles* an account of his Son *Pyrrius's* behaviour in the War.

—Hear with pleas'd Attention the renown,
The wars and wisdom of thy gallant Son:
With me from *Scyros* to the Field of Fame,
Radiant in Arms the blooming Hero came.
When *Greece* assembled all her Hundred States,
To ripen Counsels, and decide Debates,
Heav'n's! how he charm'd us with a flow of sense,
And won the heart with manly Eloquence!
He first was seen of all the Peers to rise,
(a) The third in wisdom, where they all were wise.—

Give me leave (says *Antiphaus*, interrupting him)——that very Verse I have formerly taken notice of; the Translator seems to me to have used an unnecessary Caution in it: He is tender of making *Ulysses* commend himself by Name, where *Homer* does it with the greatest bluntness.—

I know it, says *Philypsus*; but that I should have put to the account of his

(4) B. 11, 616. A. 511.

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Improvements on this Speech. Cou'd any thing have been more gross, than to have imitated that line in its own coarse, rustic Dialect? Is it not better on all Hands for such a Sentiment to be imply'd, than to be express'd?

Custom and Prejudice (answered *Antiphilus*) have now render'd it unpolite, and even shocking, for a Man almost in any Case to commend himself: But it was not thus anciently. It is certain, that it was not thus in the times of those Heroes, whom *Homer* describes; and *Homer* therefore acts with Propriety, in making *Ulysses* say, that *Nestor* and *Himself* were the wisest of all the Grecians. Now, is the Translator in this Case to follow his Author, or not? Is he to preserve the Manners of the Ancients in the characters of his Heroes? or is he to modernize them, and to make *Ulysses* and *Achilles* appear the most accomplish'd, finest Gentlemen in the World?

That will be carrying the Matter too far, replied *Philypsus*; I speak it only as to this particular; and I own I am yet to be convinc'd, that this Humour of commending themselves, was really so prevalent among the Ancients. Perhaps this is one of the Places where *Homer* nods: it might be a slip of haste or inattention.——

No,

No, interrupted *Antiphaus*, nothing can be more certain, than the freedom and honesty of Speech us'd among the Ancients in this particular; not only before *Homer*, but very long after his time.

—If *Homer's Ulysses* here calls himself the wisest of the *Grecians*, his *Achilles* does not stick at calling himself *the Best and most Valiant of them*; and that too, in a Council of all the *Princes*: *Virgil* has given us his Approbation of both the one and the other, in making *Aeneas* talk frequently of his own piety and valour.

I cou'd tire you with Quotations of this kind: *Socrates*, in *Plato*, is always brought in to his advantage; and yet there he does just the same thing with *Ulysses* in the present case: he himself quotes the Oracle, which pronounc'd him to be *the Wisest of Men*. *Xenophon* represents *Cyrus*, upon his Death-bed, as taking notice of the greatest Beauty of his own Character, his Humanity; in a Piece, which every one knows, was designed for the Character of a perfect Prince. In a word, whole Treatises have been wrote of this very thing, and in this very strain. *Cæsar*, and the great *Jewish* writer of his own Life, frequently commend themselves: the greatest Critick, as well as the greatest Orator, among the *Romans*, who so often reckons Modesty among the

things which are most necessary toward rendering a Man great in his Profession; how open and frequent is he in praising himself, and in setting his own Merit in a true Light? But what puts this beyond dispute, (and shews at the same time, that a just Commendation of one's self, may be very consistent with the *greatest Modesty*) is to be found in the sacred Writings, in which *Moses* says of himself, *that he was the meekest Man upon Earth.*

Thus free were the Ancients in commending themselves; and not to consider here, whether we, or they were in the right; (whether their *Behaviour* may not be thought to have had more of *Veracity* in it; and our Method to have been grounded, in a great degree, on a *false Estimate* of things: however that be) I think enough has been said, to shew that *Homer* was not Drowsy, when he wrote this line; and that *Ulysses* might use it, without any thing of a vicious Arrogance.

To confess the Truth (says *Philypsus*) I was really ignorant in this point of the Usage of the Ancients, and had modelled their Manners too much by our own. I now see my error; and think the Translator might have spared the excuse, which

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which he (a) makes for this Indecency in *Ulysses's* behaviour; 'tis plain, it wou'd not have been so improper, before a People, less noted for Vain-glory, than the *Phæacians*. I thank you, *Antiphaus*, for this new Light; and shall go on with the Hero's Character of *Pyrrhus*, without thinking him so assuming, as he formerly appear'd to me to have been. After placing the Son of *Achilles* next to *Nestor* and Himself in Wisdom, he proceeds to give an account of his Courage; and in that, sets him above all the *Grecians*, without Exception.

But when, to try the fortune of the day,
Host mov'd tow'rd host in terrible array,
Before the van, impatient for the fight,
With martial port he strode, and stern delight.—

When *Ilium* in the horse receiv'd her doom,
And unseen armies ambush'd in its womb;
Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,
'Twas mine on *Troy* to pour th' imprison'd war:
Then, when the boldest bosom beat with fear,
When the stern eyes of Heroes dropp'd a tear;
Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd,
Flush'd in his Cheek, or sally'd in his Blood;
Indignant in the dark recess he stands,
Pants for the battle, and the war demands;
His voice breath'd death; and with a martial air
(b) He grasp'd his Sword, and shook his glitt'ring
[Spear.

(a) Note on Ver. 626. B. 11.

(b) B. 11, 650. A. 531.

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How well is the earnest Spirit of a young Hero kept up throughout this whole Passage? How does the impetuosity of his Soul appear, in these previous Actions of the warrior? Had one the poetical Liberty of making comparisons, I shou'd not stick at saying, that this has a great resemblance to that admirable description of a War-horse, in the most finish'd Poem in the World.

— (a) *Tum, si qua senum procul arma dedere ;
Stare loco nescit, micat auribus, & tremit artus :
Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem.*

'Tis possible that Mr. Pope had this behaviour of *Pyrrhus* in his Eye, when he gave those lively Strokes in the entrance of his *Ode for Musick*. We see the Heroes there in the same Postures, when animated by the martial strains of *Orpheus*.

(b) Each chief his sev'nfold shield display'd,
And half unsheath'd the shining blade ;
And Seas, and Rocks, and Skies resound
To arms, to arms, to arms !

By the sudden flow of their Spirits, and the rapidity of their Imagination, they prevent the War : they shew a

(a) *Virgil's Georgicks*, 3, 83.

(b) Stanza 3.

noble forgetfulness of the Place and Circumstances of things about them, and think themselves already engaging with the absent Enemy.

There is one Speech more of those I mention'd at first, which I cannot forbear repeating to you; tho' I am sensible, that I have been too long upon this Head already. It is that of *Circe* to *Ulysses*, in the *tenth Odyssey*.

[giv'n.

Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was
Hence to thy fellows! (dreadful she began)
Go, be a Beast! — I heard, and yet was Man.

Then sudden whirling like a waving Flame
My beamy faulchion, I assault the Dame:
Struck with unusual fear, she trembling cries,
She faints, she falls, she lifts her weeping eyes.

[you came?

What art thou? say! from whence, from whom
O more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
Amazing strength these poisons to sustain!
Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy Brain.
Or art thou he? the Man to come (foretold
By *Hermes* pow'ful with the Wand of Gold)
The Man from *Troy*, who wander'd Ocean round,
The Man, for Wisdom's various Arts renown'd:
(a) *Ulysses*? — Oh! thy threat'ning fury cease. —

What starts? what terror, and amazement?
What passionate breaks are there
in these lines? How solemn is the be-

(a) B. 10. 395. &c. 330.

ginning?

ginning? how emphatical the account of the action? and how lively the surprize and confusion of the Inchantress, upon finding the inefficacy of her Charms? Nature here appears in every Word that she says; if the Disappointment is great and shocking, the lines too are all impetuous and abrupt: if the passions strong and various, the Expressions in the Translation are instant and pressing, and the style often chang'd: How great and swift is the Alteration, from an imperious cruel Tyrant, to a poor weak helpless Woman? And how is it equall'd by that judicious shifting of the scene in this piece? There the change is as sudden and immediate; and nothing can be greater than the fall from the haughtiness of

Go, be a Beast! — — —

to the meanness of the line just after,

She faints, she falls; she lifts her weeping Eyes.

You cannot but observe farther, my *Antiphaus*, that Mr. Pope has improv'd this description with all those Figures, which the Ancient Criticks have always look'd upon as the most proper to express an hurry of Passion. The *Transposition*, the *Omission* of Words, the pressing use of

Ex.

Exclaiming and Interrogation, and the general *Inconnection* which runs through it, are all apply'd in the most natural and poetical Manner. There is a Note on a Passage not long before this, which gives us in one view several excellent Observations of this kind, and which probably he had in his Eye here; for the rules of it are exactly follow'd in the present case. This Poet is the best Commentator on himself; give me leave therefore just to look back for the (a) Note on the Speech of *Eurylochus*; that you may see how exactly those Observations tally with his performance here, in every particular Article.

" We have here (says he) a very lively
 " picture of a person in a great fright:—
 " the very manner of speaking repre-
 " sents the disorder of the speaker; he
 " is in too great an Emotion to introduce
 " his Speech by any Preface, he breaks
 " at once into it without preparation,
 " as if he could not soon enough deliver
 " his thoughts."——Again:

" There is nothing, which gives more
 " life to a Discourse, than the taking
 " away (b) the Connections and Con-
 " junctions; when the discourse is not

(a) Note on B. 10. Ver. 295.

(b) From *Longinus* de Subl. c. 17.

“bound together and embarrass’d, it
 “walks and slides along of itself. *Pe-*
riods thus cut off, and yet pronounc’d
 “with Precipitation, are signs of a lively
 “Sorrow; which at the same time hin-
 “ders, yet forces him to speak.” —

Again, in a like case.

“He speaks short, and in broken and
 “interrupted Periods, which excellently
 “represent the agony of his thoughts. —
 “Afterwards we see he breaks out into
 “Interrogations, which, as (*a*) *Longinus*
 “observes, give great motion, strength,
 “and action to Discourse. If the Poet
 “had proceeded simply, the Expression
 “had not been equal to the occasion;
 “but by these short Questions, he gives
 “strength to it, and shews the disorder
 “of the speaker, by the sudden starts
 “and vehemence of the Periods.”

All these animated Figures, all those
 Arts of expressing the Passions, are beau-
 tifully wove into this single piece of Poe-
 try: but there is one peculiar Excellence
 in it yet behind, which I admire beyond
 all the rest. It is a Power almost un-
 known even to Poetry before, and the
 Criticks have not as yet found out any
 Name for it. The extraordinary Beauty

(a) De Subl. c. 17.

I mean, is that *Insight* which the Poet gives his Readers into *Circe's Mind*: We look into her Soul, and see the Ideas pass there in Train. At first she is ignorant; then dubious: and at last discovers gradually in her Thoughts the Character, and very Name of the Hero. *Circe*, skill'd as she was in all the arts of Magick, is limited in her Knowledge and Discovery of things: and in the present Discovery of the Person of *Ulysses*, her Mind acts with Tumult and Rapidity, but at the same time with a series and gradual Collection of Truths, at first unknown. Every one may perceive the Tumult, and the successive Enlightenings of her Mind. We are led into a full View of the shifting of her thoughts; and behold the various openings of them in her Soul.

[you came?

*What art thou? say! from whence, from whom
Or art thou He? the Man to come forerold—*

The Man, from Troy? —

*The Man, for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Ulysses? —*

I never read any thing which sets the actings of another's Mind so distinctly to the view. *Circe's* very Thoughts are made visible to us; they are set full before our Eyes; and we see the different degrees

degrees, as it were, of Light, breaking in upon her Soul. — Every one must think this an extreme fine piece of Poetry. For my own part, upon turning it every way, and considering all its several perfections, I believe one might venture to pronounce it the most finish'd Piece, the most complete Beauty in the whole Translation.

These are the productions of a Sublime Genius, and speak an uncommon Spirit, together with a firm extensive Judgment, and an exact Sense of things. But you, *Antiphaus*, chiefly complain of this Writer for his Refinements and Elevation: there is too much of the *Enfure*, as the *French* call it, in his Works; and you cannot bear with such a profusion of Glitter and Embroidery in the Language. I do not deny, that the Passages you repeated, are generally blameable on these accounts; but beg leave to produce some instances, which may shew the Translator to be a master in the just and proper style; as the former convince us of his Excellence in the enlivened, and pathetic.

How humble are the lines in particular, (a) where *Ulysses* meets with *Minerva* in *Ithaca*, and how rural the

(a) B. 13.

(b) Scene

(b) Scene between him and *Eumæus* in that Island? So far, that for my own Part I must confess, I shou'd be more apt to imagine, that Mr. *Pope* on these Occasions sinks now and then into Lownesses, beneath the dignity of the Epic, than that he soars too high, or uses any false Elevation.

As for the just and chaste manner of expressing things, it is very frequent in these Passages: there is a place just come into my Head, in which this very way of speaking is described; the lines are close and expressive; and, according to Mr. *Pope's* Method in his incomparable *Essay*, are themselves the best example of the thing they treat of; they are (b) in the Eighth Book:

With partial hands the Gods their gifts dispense;
Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense.
Here Heav'n an elegance of form denies,
But Wisdom the defect of form supplies:
This Man with energy of thought controuls,
And steals with modest violence our Souls;
He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse.

The Conclusion of *Tiresias's* Speech to *Ulysses*, I dare answer for it, you will think excellent in this Way:

(a) B. 14.

(b) Ver. 185. 3. 170.

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—Peaceful shalt thou end thy blissful days,
And steal thyself from life, by slow decays:
Unknown to pain, in age resign thy breath,
When late stern *Neptune* points the shaft with death,
To the dark grave retiring as to Rest,
(a) Thy people blessing, by thy people blest.

By this we see, how Mr. *Pope* can enliven any thing of this kind with the greatest Justice as well as Beauty: such (to mention but one more) is that single Passage, as I take it, in all *Homer's Works*, which describes the Regions of the Blest. The Lines are very beautiful in the Original; and the Translation has expressed all the beauties of it in a lively proper fluency of Verse:

Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains
Of utmost Earth, where *Rhadamanthus* reigns:
Joys ever-young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
Fill the wide circle of th' Eternal Year.
Stern Winter smiles on that auspicious clime;
The Fields are florid with unfading Prime:
From the bleak pole no Winds inclement blow,
Mould the round Hail, or flake the fleecy Snow:
But from the breezy deep, the Blest inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the Western gale.
This grace peculiar will the Gods afford [Lord:]
(b) To thee, the Son of *Jove*, and beauteous *Helen's*

What can be more Just and Beautiful?
The Thought proper and adequate; the

(a) B. II, 169. A. 136.

(b) B. 4. 776. N. 564 to 569.

EVENING II. 61

Words glowing; and the Language alive:
To me, the Verses themselves seem to
run on with joy, and pleasure. The de-
lightful Softness of those lines in *Homer*

'Αλλ' αἰεὶ ζεφύροιο λιγυπνεΐοντος αἴσας
'Ωκεανὸς ἀνίσσιν ἀναψύχειν ἀνθρώπους,

is diffus'd thro' the whole Description in
the Translation; and the latter has the
advantage of the Original, in concluding
with a full elastick line, that carries a
Spring with it; instead of the heaviness
of

—Καί σφιν γαμβρὸς Διὸς ἔσσι.

I entirely agree with you (says *Anti-
phaus*) as to the turn of the Lines; 'tis
very fine and vigorous: but methinks
even in these, what answers the two par-
ticular *Greek* Verses you have repeated,
are too much flourish'd, and more remark-
able for their Sound, than for any other
Idea they may give the Mind.

I shall not stand with you for that
Couplet, answer'd *Philypsus*: what I chief-
ly admire is the general flow of the lines
in the whole Passage.

This manner of writing, *Antiphaus*, is
very assistant in expressing the Nature of
the Subject: and indeed, tho' Mr. Pope
may sometimes go too far in the Florid
and Artificial, we may say in general,
that he is a very Natural Writer. His
Imagi-

Imagination is lively, his Colours strong, and his Hand masterly in most of his strokes. We shou'd lose ourselves in endeavouring to observe all that variety of Beauties of this kind, which are to be found in his Translation: one Point I have particularly admired in it; the Poet's peculiar Air, and Happiness in drawing Landscapes; especially hanging Woods, Slopes, and Precipices: Thus:

—High *Ithaca* o'erlooks the Floods, [Woods.
(a) Brown with o'er-arching Shades, and pendent

What Reader will be so unconcern'd, and so little taken with this Prospect, as *Ueysse* is represented to be in another Part of the Poem? For 'tis the same place, that we have a description of afterwards, when we are told, That he

—Deep-musing, o'er the Mountains stray'd,
Thro' mazy thickets of the woodland shade,
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,
(b) With cliffs, and nodding forests over-hung.

In *Ulysses's* first adventures in *Phœacia*, we are led on successively, thro' several very beautiful Descriptions. First we

(a) B. 3, 96. γ'. 81.

(b) B. 14, 4.

EVENING II. 63

have a (a) rocky Coast, excellently pictur'd in two lines only: thence we are carried into a (b) thick dark Wood, for that Night. The next Morning, we have a (c) View of the City: The first things which offer to the Eye are the Castle, and the Senate-house, rising above the other Buildings; at a distance, across the great Road, appears the Port with the Ships at Anchor, and their Streamers fluttering in the Air: on the Shore, just by the Temple of *Neptune*, you see the *Phæacians* busied in the Dock, all in their several Employments. After this View, you pass thro' a (d) delicious Range of Groves and Meadow-ground, up to the Walls; while on this side, (e) appear the Gardens all in bloom; as the Vineyards of *Alcinous* close the Scene on the other.

There can be nothing better imagin'd, and more natural, than these Descriptions are in Mr. *Pope's* Translation: they exceed even the Original itself.

I beg leave to repeat another Description to you, which lies not so diffus'd as

(a) B. 5, 520, 521. é. 402.

(b) B. 5, 613, to 622. é. 480.

(c) B. 6, 310, to 320. ζ'. 262, 269.

(d) B. 6, 350. ζ'. 291.

(e) B. 6, 355. ζ'. 293.

the former; 'tis one single View of *Calypso's* Grotto; and what an exact and beautiful Draught of it does it give us?

——— A variousylvan scene

Appears around, and groves of living green;
 Poplars and Alders ever quiv'ring play'd,
 And nodding Cypress form'd a fragrant shade;
 On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
 The Birds of broadest wing their mansion form,
 (The Chough, the Sea-mew, the loquacious Crow)
 And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
 Depending Vines the shelving Cavern screen,
 With purple clusters blushing thro' the green:
 Four limpid fountains from the Cliff distil,
 And ev'ry fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
 (a) In mazy windings wand'ring down the Hill.

Nothing can be more beautiful to the Eye, than these Landscapes are in the Poem: they make every thing present to us; and agreeably deceive us into an Imagination, that we (b) *actually See, what we only Hear*: As the Poet may improve all his Circumstances at pleasure, what the Criticks have observ'd in this Case, is not so extravagant, as one wou'd imagine; we really see things more fully and with greater delight in the Poem, than we shou'd in the reality; the Picture im-

(a) B. 5, 92. & 71.

(b) Τὴν ἀκρόν ὁφείλον ποιεῖν. Longin. περὶ τῆς φαντασίας.

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proves upon Nature: and we might look on the Prospect itself with (a) *less pleasure, than we hear it described.*

Whoever is shock'd at this, may be pleas'd to consider *the Cave of the Nymphs*, in the Thirteenth Book: That alone may serve to shew, how largely Circumstances may be added, in describing the works of Nature, or in drawing poetical Prospects.

Mr. Pope shews an excellent Hand in several other Places; as in the first View of *Circe's Palace* at a distance, and constantly in the appearance of Land off at Sea.

Ulysses gives us an account of the former at his landing upon the Island of that Goddess.

(b) From the high Point I mark'd in distant view
A stream of curling Smoke ascending blue,
And spiry tops, the tufted Trees above,
Of *Circe's Palace* bosom'd in the Grove.

The other is very frequent: take a Description or two of it, that come into my Mind at present.

(a) Κρεῖττον γέγονεν ἀκυδῆναι λεγόμενον ἢ ὀφθῆναι
νόμον. *Dionysius Hal. Περὶ Συνδίστασις. γ'.*

(b) B. 10, 173. κ'. 150.

(a) Like distant Clouds the Mariner descries
Fair *Ithaca's* emerging Hills arise.

Again ;

(b) The distant Land appear'd —
Then swell'd to sight *Phæacia's* dusky coast,
And woody Mountains half in vapours lost ;
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad Shield amid the watry waste.

Nothing hath furnish'd *Homer* (as well as *Virgil*) with such a variety of natural Images, as this Element ; and in nothing has *Mr. Pope* more finely copied his Original. But all these Beautiful Pictures, are only Pictures of *still Life* ; this Gentleman's Excellency reaches farther ; he is as masterly in all his Motions, and Actions ; he can teach his Pencil to express Ideas yet in the Mind, and to paint out the Passions of the Soul.

Sometimes we have all the *Imagery* in Motion : If a Ship is to set sail, the Canvas swells to the Eye, the Streamers float in the Air, and the Sailors are all full of Noise and Business : You see the Vessel move on, and hear the rushing sound of the Water : You behold the

(a) B. 13, 115. v. 95.

(b) B. 5, 356. l. 279.

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Rowers, drawing (a) *the Oar to their broad Breasts*; and the different attitudes of them, as they (b) *bend*, or (c) *stretch* to the stroke.

(d) At once they bend and strike their equal oars,
And leave the sinking hills, and less'ning shores.

This Idea of the Land seeming to sink and recede, is very beautifully added in another Place, where we have the Description of a Person driving, very swiftly, in a Chariot : I believe you will hear the intire Passage with Pleasure, as it is all very Just and Natural:

With hasty hand the ruling reins he drew :
He lash'd the courfers, and the courfers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and smoak'd along the field.
The Tow'rs of *Pylus* sink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fly back, till close of Day,
(e) Then sunk the Sun, and darken'd all the way. }

Again;

Along the waving fields their way they hold,
(f) The fields receding as the Chariot roll'd.

(a) B. 12, 183. 4. 147.

(b) B. 12, 216.

(c) B. 12, 265.

(d) B. 13, 94. v. 78.

(e) B. 3, 618. 2. 435.

(f) B. 3, 628. 2. 495.

D 3

Give

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Give me leave (interpos'd *Antiphaus*) to observe one thing by the way. Mr. *Pope* deviates here a little from the Truth, and chuses rather to shew the *Poet*, than the *Antiquary*. As I take it, the Horses in the Chariots of the Ancients were not *beneath the Yoke*. Do not their Medals, and all the Pictures of them represent it otherwise? And does not the Verse here in the Original, shew its Position in respect of the Horses, very particularly and distinctly?

However, this is a slip of a small Nature: and had the thing been express'd in exact Conformity to the *Grecian* fashion in this particular, it might not have struck the Reader so strongly, as it does now by its Agreement with the present Idea of the same thing.

I am not concerned, says *Philypsus*, either in defending, or giving up that particular: I only instance this Passage, in general, for its expressiveness of such an Action, and of the Ideas arising in the Mind upon it: As to that *End*, I believe it will hold very well. The Description and Sentiment is very Natural, (replied *Antiphaus*) I beg you to go on without observing any little breaks for the future, which may be occasion'd by such Circumstances, as do not affect the

the chief Aim and Design of a Quotation.

If the *Poet*, proceeded *Philypsus*, can paint out the *Ideas* in the Mind with so much Justice, as he appears to do by this instance; and more particularly by another mention'd before (of the successive *Openings* and *Unfolding* of an unknown Truth, in the Mind of *Circe*) we shall find him to have been equally Happy in expressing the *Passions* of the Soul. Something of this has been mention'd already, and almost an infinite variety of Beauties of the same kind might be added. They abound every-where in the Translation, and are generally well touch'd. But there is the Description of one Passion in particular, which is preserv'd throughout the whole Piece: It is *Ulysses* his Love for his Country. Give me leave to repeat some of the first, and last Passages, in which it is express'd. How strongly does *Minerva* represent this, even in the very entrance of the Poem? She says the Hero is detain'd from *Ithaca*, by a Goddess (nothing human cou'd have forc'd him into so tedious an absence: by a Goddess)

Who sooths to dear delight his anxious mind—
 Successless all her soft caresses prove,
 To banish from his breast his Country's love;

D. 4.

To

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To see the *Smoke* from his lov'd palace rise,
While the dear Isle in *distant* prospect lies,
(a) With what *contentment* wou'd he close his Eyes?

The first Appearance of the Hero is most excellently imagined. *Calypso* has just receiv'd orders to detain *Ulysses* no longer from his Country; she finds him sitting alone upon the Rocks, the Tears trickling down his Cheeks, and his Eyes fixt upon the Sea. It was thus that he pass'd his Hours, in the Island of that Goddess: He constantly,

In slumber wore the heavy Night away;
On Rocks and Shores consum'd the tedious Day:
There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone,
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main, [again.
(b) Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd

Pardon me, says *Antiphaus*; even here (tho' the Passion be strongly set out, yet) the Language of the two Passages, which you repeated last, is not intirely free from the old Fault: That *soothing an anxious Mind to dear delight*, falls short of the plainness and energy of the Original: — To make the *Mountains groan with echoing Sorrow*, is yet more overwrought. — And the *streaming again* of

(a) B. 1, 77. d. 59.

(b) B. 5, 204. e. 154.

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his Eyes, is not exactly right in the Translation, which does not mention his *weeping before*; at the same time that it varies from the Original, which says, that he *never ceas'd from weeping*.

We meet with another Image of this (reply'd *Philypsus*) in the Evening before *Ulysses* sets sail for *Ithaca*; which, I believe, you will allow to be better express'd. He was then in so delightful a Place, as the Court of *Alcinous*. They had a multitude of Diversions there: the *Phæacians* were the happiest People in the World; Races and Entertainments, Mirth, Wine and Musick, were the chief Business of their Lives. *Ulysses* appears among them with a quite different face: he looks like a Creature of an higher Make, of an Order above them; and his Mind is taken up with farther Views, and other Desires.

All, but *Ulysses*, heard with fixt delight:
He sat, and ey'd the Sun, and wish'd the Night;
Slow seem'd the Sun to move, the hours to roll,
(a) His native Home deep-imag'd in his Soul.

We are continually put in mind of this fondness of the Hero for his Country: and in the last Case, it is particularly

(a) B. 13, 38. v'. 30.

fixt upon the Reader by a very expressive (a) Simile. We may imagine the ardency of *Ulysses's* Love for his *Ithaca*, his own proper Country, when we consider his Affection for the *Greeks* his Countrymen in general. Upon an occasional revival in his Thoughts of the Destructions and Misery they underwent before *Troy*, the Hero's Disimulation (great as it was) is overcome; his Passion breaks through every restraint: we immediately see him all in Tears. This tenderness of his is painted in another Simile, the most pathetick that can be conceived, and the most expressive of his Affection for his Countrymen.

————— *Ulysses's* griefs renew;

Tears bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew:
As some fond Matron views in mortal fight
Her Husband falling in his Country's right;
Frantick thro' clashing swords she runs, she flies,
As ghastly pale he groans, and faints, and dies;
Close to his Breast she grovels on the ground,
And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound;
She cries, she shrieks: the fierce insulting foe
Relentless mocks her violence of woe;
To chains condemn'd as wildly she deplores,
(a) A widow, and a slave, on foreign shores.

(a) See Note on the Place.

(b) B. 8, 580. 6'. 530.

It would be endless to repeat every thing of this Nature; there are a Thousand sketches of it in the *Odyssey*. 'Tis sufficient at present to observe, that Mr. *Pope* generally gives them to us in very lively Colours; and excels almost everywhere in the *Pathetick*. 'Tis certain, (says *Antiphaus*) that he has an excellent Hand; his Images, which you have set before me, are as strong as any of the Works of the Pencil. They are so, answered *Philypsus*; and on that account, you will Pardon me for borrowing so many Expressions from Painting in this Case; 'tis unavoidable. The designs of Painting and Poetry are so united, that to me the Poet and the Painter seem scarcely to differ in any thing, except the Mean they make use of, to arrive at one and the same end. Both are to express Nature: but the Materials of the one are Words and Sound; of the other, Figure and Colours. Poetry can paint more particularly, more largely, and with greater Coherence: Painting is the more concise, and emphatical. If *This* may excel in shewing one View distinctly, *That* can shew several in succession, without any manner of Confusion. Any figure in Painting is confin'd to one Attitude; but Poetry can give as great a variety of Motion and Postures,

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Postures, as the reality itself. What seems a Paradox of Art in either, is their Power of expressing two *opposite Passions* in the same face. Of this sort (among a Multitude of like instances) is the Mother of *Lewis* the Thirteenth, in the Gallery of *Luxembourg*; and every Piece in that fine Episode, which concludes the sixth *Iliad*. In that *Picture*, the Queen's Face strongly expresses the Pain and Anguish of her Condition, mix'd with a regard toward her Son, full of the greatest Pleasure and Complacency. In the *Poem* we have the greater variety, and each piece is perfectly just and finish'd. *Hector* shews a fierceness for the War, and a tenderness that inclines him to stay for a last interview; little *Astyanax* has a Fondness and a Terror in his Eyes, at the sight of his Father; while *Andromache's* Face is all soften'd into a tender Smile; and, at the same time, wet with the Tears, that fall for her *Hector*.

I remember (says *Antiphaus*) it was to you that I was oblig'd for the first Observation I ever met with, on these *Double Passions*. I have since read several things (in the *Aeneid*, as well as in the Works of *Homer*) with a pleasure perfectly new, on account of the light you then gave me into this particular: And out of a Thousand Places, that I have observ'd

observ'd it in since, I know none more beautiful than that of *Achæmenides* in *Virgil*, which you mention'd to me the first time we ever talk'd of this Subject.

That you know (reply'd *Philypsus*) to have been always my Favourite: I have read it over in *Dryden* so frequently, that I believe I can now repeat you his Translation of it:

—From the Woods there bolts, before our sight,
Somewhat betwixt a Mortal and a Spright;
So thin, so ghastly meager, and so wan,
So bare of Flesh, he scarce resembled Man:
This thing, all tatter'd, seem'd from far t'implore
Our pious Aid, and pointed to the Shore.
We look behind; then view his shaggy Beard;
His cloaths were tagg'd with thorns, and filth his
limbs besmear'd:

The rest in mien, in habit, and in face,
Appear'd a *Greek*; and such indeed he was:
He cast on us from far a frightful view,
Whom soon for *Trojans* and for foes he knew;
Stood still, and paus'd; then, all at once, began
To stretch his Limbs, and trembled as he ran;
Soon as approach'd, upon his knees he falls,
And thus with tears and sighs for pity calls:
“ Now by the Pow'rs above, and what we share
“ From Nature's common gift, this vital Air,
(a) O *Trojans*, take me hence.—

’Tis but too evident (continu'd *Philypsus*) that Mr. *Dryden* falls as much

(a) *Dryd.* Transl. *Æn.* 3, 788.

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short of (b) *Virgil* in the chief turn that relates to our present purpose, as *Virgil* has exceeded that (b) Passage in the *Iliad*, which might possibly have given him the hint for drawing this admirable Image.

This Distraction of *Achæmenides* between several Passions at once, puts me in mind of the dubiousness and shifting of thoughts, which is illustrated in *Homæ* by a very apt and expressive Simile; than which (says Mr. Pope) “There (c)”
 “is scarce any thing, in the whole compass of Nature, that can more exactly represent the State of an irresolute mind, wavering between two different Designs; sometimes inclining to the one, sometimes to the other, and then moving to that Point to which its Resolution is at last determin’d.”

As when old Ocean’s silent surface sleeps,
 The Waves just heaving on the purple Deep;

(a) *Æn.* 3, 592.

— Subito è sylvis macie confecta supremâ,
 Ignoti nova forma viri, miserandaque cultu
 Proceðit, supplexque manus ad litora tendit—

— Ubi Dardaniòs habitus & Troia vidit
 Arma procul; paullum aspectu contreritus *hæsit*,
 Continuitque gradum: mox sese ad litora præcepit
 Cum fletu precibusque *rulit*.—

(b) *IX. v. 358.*

(c) Note on *ll.* 14, 21.

While

While yet th' expected Tempest hangs on high,
 Weighs down the cloud, and blackens in the sky,
 The mass of waters will no wind obey:
Jove sends one gust, and bids them roll away.
 While wav'ring counsels thus his mind engage,
 Fluctuates in doubtful thought the *Pylian* sage;
 To join the host, or to the Gen'ral haste,
 (a) Debating long, he fixes on the last.

There is something of this *Mixture of Passions*, (and those too the most beautiful in this Case, I mean of opposite *Passions*) in that line of *Milton*, where he says that Death

Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile—

One wou'd almost be persuaded, that *Homer* is the last Resort of all the finest Thoughts in Poetry; for this likewise seems to have been copied from him, tho' it fails very much (as to the Point in hand) both of the Original, and of Mr. *Pope's* Translation of it. — *Juno* makes a very mutinous Speech in an assembly of the *Deities*: The Infection took, as much as she could desire: and that success, provok'd and inflam'd as she was, forced her to be somewhat pleased, in spite of herself: Upon this she shews a sort of (b) uneasy satisfaction, in such a Smile,

(a) *Iliad* 14. 30.

(b) *Il. 6.* 103.

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as *Ovid* (a) gives to his *Envy* in the *Metamorphosis*.

To see the gath'ring grudge in ev'ry breast,
Smiles on her lips a spleenful joy exprest;
While on her wrinkled front, and eye-brow bent,
(b) Sat stedfast care, and low'ring discontent.

There are many things in *Virgil's* fourth *Æneid*, which might be produc'd on this Occasion: but 'tis more to our present Subject to consider that part of the *Odyssey*, from which some of its finest strokes are borrowed. *Calypso*, when she acquaints our Hero with the design of his departure from her Island; upon his doubting her sincerity, swears very solemnly, that her Resolutions are real: the next moment, she falls into a Speech full of Insinuations and Arguments to detain him: both these speeches may rather be said to be *enliven'd* and *improv'd*, than to be *well translated* by Mr. *Pope*; this only wou'd be too narrow a Commendation of them: — The first runs thus:

How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise?
But hear, Oh Earth, and hear, ye sacred Skies!

(a) *Risus abest; nisi quem visum movere dolores.*
B. 2. 778.

(b) *Pope's Iliad*, B. 15. 213.

And thou, Oh *Stryx*! whose formidable floods
 Glide thro' the shades, and bind th' attesting Gods;
 No form'd design, no meditated end
 Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
 Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
 The same my practise, were my fate the same.
 Heav'n has not curst me with a heart of steel,
 (a) But giv'n the sense to pity, and to feel.

One wou'd think now that the Goddess was to do nothing but advise about his Voyage, and the Conveniencies for it: but her Passions immediately veer about; and the very next Page, the very next time she speaks, 'tis all in a strain intirely opposite to what she has been saying in this:

Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
 O sprung from Gods! in wisdom more than Man!
 Isthen thy home the passion of thy heart?
 Thus wilt thou leave me? are we thus to part?
 Farewel! and ever joyful mayst thou be;
 Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
 But ah, *Ulysses*! wert thou giv'n to know
 What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo,
 (b) Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease, &c.

I must not forget here, that one of the finest of the modern *Italian* Poets has express'd this Mixture of opposite Passions,

(a) B. 5, 246. s. 191.

(b) B. 5, 265. s. 208.

on an occasion which is attended with such a Circumstance as exceeds any of the other: The particular in which he shews it, shews at the same time the *swiftness* of the intervening Passion; and expresses the strongest of any, how immediately one flow of Spirits succeeds upon a former and quite contrary emotion. *Armida*, deserted by her *Rinaldo*, breathes nothing but fury and revenge; she pursues him in the heat of the battle; forgetful of her former passion, she aims an arrow at his heart: but see, while it is yet in its flight, how the passions vary on her face! her rage and fury soften into tenderness, and apprehension of his danger! in an instant her Love is too strong for her Resentment: in an instant, she dreads lest her Design should be effectual, and longs to be disappointed in her aim:

(a) Swift flies the shaft: as swiftly flies her pray'r,
That all its vehemence be spent in air.

How finely are the Passions blended in this piece? The Transition from the extremity of fury to an excess of love, is manag'd in such a manner, as to be wholly imperceptible: as when two Colours are

(a) *Lo stral volo; ma con lo strale un v olò*
Subito uscì, che vada il colpo a vero.

Tasso's Ger. Lib. Cant. 20. St. 63.
lost

lost in the Shades of each other, the Eye is agreeably deceived; and we are delighted with the delicacy of their Union, tho' unable to discover where one commences, or the other ends.

In this particular there is not any thing that can equal Poetry, or bear to be compared with it, except its sister-art of Painting; that might copy every instance I have mention'd here: And certainly what makes so beautiful a Figure in the finest Poets, might deserve the imitation of the best Painters. Was not the *Dolon* and *Cahypso* of *Homer* worthy the hand of a *Zeuxis* or *Apelles*? Wou'd not the *Aruns* and *Achæmenides* of *Virgil* have been a fine design even for *Corregio* or *Raphael* to have work'd upon? If our *Shakespear* can give us the struggle of Passions in the Breast of *Coriolanus*, *Wall* might trace the same, and speak them as well with his Pencil: And if *Corneille* has strongly express'd the contrary desires of the sister of the *Curiatii*; his Countryman *Le Brun* might have had a much finer Subject in the various Passions of the *Sabines*, rushing in amidst the two contending Armies, to prevent those fatal Consequences, in which the Victory of either party must necessarily involve them.

But what I have often thought of as one of the finest Subjects of this kind, either

either for Poetry or Painting, is the first *Brutus* on the Judicial-seat, just before the act of giving Sentence on his own Sons, for their treachery to the Commonwealth. What a noble strife was there, between natural Affection, and the Love of one's Country? between Duty, and Desire? between common Humanity, and the Spirit (perhaps the Pride) of a *Roman*? What a fine Groupe of Figures wou'd the Suppliants for the Criminals compose in such a Piece? On one side of the Tribunal, the *Wife* of the Judge and *Mother* of the Offenders, and all the Relations divided in the same manner, between a desire of moving Pity, and an abhorrence of the very Crime for the Pardon of which they wou'd intercede: The People of *Rome*, on the other side, with looks full of mixt Passions; some struck with pity, amidst all their severity; some almost condemning and yet approving at the same time, the rigid justice of the Father; while others commiserate the Youth of the Sons, and seem incens'd at the Unnatural Impartiality of the Judge.

'Tis a Misfortune, that *Virgil's* Hand was with-held from launching farther (a) where he has touch'd upon this Sub-

(a) *Æn.* 6. 821.

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fect: but it would be well made up to us, if any eminent Person, in the other Art, wou'd undertake it: It might certainly make a finisht Piece; and Painting in this particular wou'd have the advantage of Poetry, as it could express this Mixture of passions directly, and wou'd strike the mind with them in their proper Union, all at once: whereas, when taken from the Poetical Picture, the combination is not so easy; and we scarce ever conceive it so closely as we ought.

Were you to give me full scope, I shou'd carry the resemblance between these Arts much farther than it has ever yet been carried: There is perhaps scarce a *Figure* or *Manner* in Poetry which I shou'd not imagine to have its tally in the Schools of the Painters: I cou'd find it even in the very next point, which comes in my way, in the *Emphatical*. Natural Descriptions, as they are Pictures which take in the various Circumstances of a place or action, give us generally several Groupes of finisht Figures: This, on the contrary, is a way of expressing Nature in Poetry, not unlike Sketches and first Draughts in Painting: and as the lines in Sketches are *fewer*, but more *animated*; this must be always *concise*, and very *expressive*.

There

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There are several masterly strokes of the *Emphatical* kind in the *Odyssey*: Such is that Speech of *Telemachus*, where he says,

Prepar'd I stand. He was but born to try
(a) The lot of Man: To suffer, and to die.

Such is *Circe's* whole speech (b) which I repeated to you before, on account of its being so pathetic. Such, in an high degree, is the first rencounter of the Hero with that Goddess.

Hence to thy Fellows (Dreadful she began)
(c) Go, be a Beast.—I heard; and yet was Man.

This *Manner* is necessary in all *Sententious* passages, and *moral* reflections; 'tis often strong in expressing the *passions*: and peculiarly useful in the *Sublime*. Take an instance of each, from Mr. Pope.

(d)—Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
The foes of peace, and scourges of Mankind,
To whom offending Men are made a prey,
When *Jove* in vengeance gives a land away:

(a) B. 3, 119. γ'. 95, 96.

(b) B. 10, 387, to 392.

(c) B. 10, 382. κ'. 321.

(d) B. 14, 110. ξ'. 88.

Ev'n these, when of their ill-got spoils possess'd,
Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast:
Some voice of God close whispering from within,
"Wretch! this is Villainy, and this is Sin."

The reflection upon seeing *Agamemnon*
in *Hades*, is of this kind.

(a) Now all *Atrides* is an empty shade!

Just after *Atrides* speaks thus passionately
in the account of his own Death, by
the treachery of *Aegisthus*:

(b) But not with me the direful Murder ends:
These, These expir'd!—Their crime they were,
[my friends.

In the *Sublime*, nothing can be higher
than the language of his Gods, *Neptune*
and *Jupiter*:

(c) If such thy Will.—We will it, *Jove* replies.

This latter is that short full way of
Expression, so frequent in (d) *Virgil* and
(e) *Homer*, copied perhaps by both from

(a) B. 11, 490. λ'. 392.

(b) B. 11, 512. λ'. 412.

(c) B. 13, 177. ν'. 154.

(d) *Naviget. Æn.* 4, 237.

(e) Ἀπόπειπε. *Od.* 8. 146.

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the admired Example of it in (a) *Moses*, and grown since into an (b) *Adiom* among the Criticks. It is the more to be commended in Mr. *Pope*, because the turn he gives the Line, is perfectly his own: Indeed in every one of these instances, as I take it, the Chief of their strength and emphasis is owing to the Improvements in the Translation.

Antiphans cou'd scarce imagine, that these were all clear improvements upon *Homer*: He immediately consulted the passages in the Original; and was surpriz'd to find, how far they fell short of the Translation; especially in the lines that answer *Circe's threat*, and the complaint of *Agamemnon*. I am pleas'd (says he) beyond measure, in consulting these parts of the Poem, to see how much strength and force there is added to them; have you not observ'd more instances of this kind? impart them to me, good *Philypsus*: 'Tis no matter for method or regularity; give them to me immediately. — Had I time (answer'd *Philypsus*) I cou'd find out several other places which have all their proper improvements; at present, I shall refer you

(a) The great *Fiat*.

(b) Πᾶς ὁ δεσπότης δ' ἄλλω μονοσύλλαβος. *Dem. Phal.* ζ'.

to the beginning of *Menelaus* his speech to *Telemachus* in the Fourth *Odyssey*; *Nestor's* (a) in the Third; and in the Tenth, the speeches between *Ulysses* and *Circe*.

— I was going to point out some passages in the (b) *Descent into Hell*: but 'tis difficult to single out particular beauties from that book; the whole of it is so excellently Translated, and (I believe I may say) so generally improv'd.

The mentioning *Circe* just now, puts me in mind of another passage: 'Tis where *Homer* describes the Metamorphosis of the companions of *Ulysses*. They had (says he) the Shape and the Voice of Beasts, (c) but their Mind remain'd firm and unalter'd: this Mr. Pope improves into the following lines:

(d) Still curst with sense, their mind remains alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they
[groan.

The addition here is very Natural, and full of Beauty; in such changes,

(a) V. 125. γ'. 103.

(b) Book 11.

(c) κ'. 240. Αὐτὰρ ῥῆς ἦν ἑμπέδος αἶς, τὰ πάρος περ.

(d) B. 10, 281.

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particularities of this kind strike us very much: *Virgil* touches them on a like Occasion (a) with his usual happiness; and (b) *Ovid*, who has shewn a particular talent for such subjects, has left us the very same thought with this of Mr. Pope.

I remember that Mr. Pope appear'd to me, upon my first reading his Translation, to have improv'd much upon the Original in his *Poetical Repetitions* of the same word, the Figure in which he is most frequent. Thus is it us'd in the following lines:

A Scene, where if a God shou'd cast his sight,
(c) A God might gaze, and wander with delight.
(d) Never, Never wicked man was wise.

'Tis yet more beautiful, when the Repetition holds farther; as in this Passage:

(e) Transported with the song, the list'ning train
Again with loud applause demand the strain:

(a) ——— Quamvis collo timuisset aratrum,
Et sæpe in lævi quæsisset cornua fronte. *Ecl.* 6, 51.

(b) ——— Conata queri, mugitus edidit ore,
Pertimuitque sonos, propriaque exterrita voce est.

Mos. 1, 638

(c) B. 5, 96. é. 73.

(d) P. 2, 320. β'. 282.

(e) B. 8, 90. 3'. 92.

Again

EVENING II. 89

*Again Ulysses veil'd his pensive head,
Again unmann'd, a show'r of Sorrow shed.*

This sometimes gives an additional solemnity, and rises stronger and stronger each Line:

Celestial as thou art, yet stand deny'd:
Or swear that oath, by which the Gods are ty'd,
Swear, in thy soul no latent frauds remain,
(a) *Swear*, by the vow which never can be vain

This is sometimes carried yet farther; and in *Virgil* particularly there is a fine Instance of this sort of Repetition (b) being doubled.

But in nothing is this figure more beautiful, than in the (c) *Siren's Song*: That Piece of antient Musick is greatly enliven'd in the Translation; the whole flows on in a peculiar Harmony, and the Chorus is very happily added in the Conclusion of it:

Celestial music warbles from their tongue,
And thus the sweet deluders tune the song.

(a) B. 10, 410. κ. 343. μέγαν ὄρκον ὀμοσσαι.

(b) Sævus amor docuit natorum sanguine matrem
Confirmaculare manus; Crudelis tu quoque, mater:
Crudelis mater magis, an puer improbus ille?
Improbus ille puer; crudelis tu quoque mater.

Ecl. 8. v. 50.

(c) B. 12, 220. ὅ. 184.

O stay, oh Pride of Greece! Ulysses, stay!
 O cease thy course, and listen to our lay!
 Blest is the Man ordain'd our voice to hear,
 The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear.
 Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!
Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise.
 We know whate'er the Kings of mighty name
 Atchiev'd at *Ilion* in the field of fame;
 Whate'er beneath the sun's bright journey lies.
O stay, and learn new wisdom from the wise!

The peculiar justice and propriety of this, is the manner in which these Goddesses apply to *Ulysses*; (a) by offering him knowledge; a thing the most opposite to their own Complexion; and a motive, the most likely to obtain upon that Hero. There is a great deal of Taste and Judgment shewn in improving so finely upon this Circumstance; but what runs through the whole, is that musical enliven'd turn of the Verses. This is the happiness, which of all things I admire in Mr. Pope: either in prose, or verse, he has the finest flow that can be imagin'd. I have often heard a very good Critick say, That *whenever he is reading any Prose of Mr. Pope's, he cannot help thinking that he should never have wrote any thing else: and whenever he reads his Ver-*

(a) See Note on the Place.

EVENING II. 91

ses, he is angry with him, for losing any time from them, for Prose. How often has the same Gentleman apply'd to this writer those Lines in *Milton*, in which he speaks of the first Poet, as well as the first of Men?

— (a) Such prompt Eloquence
Flows from his lips: In Prose or num'rous Verse
More tuneable, than needed Lute or Harp
To add more sweetness. —

There are a Multitude of other passages, which deserve to be mention'd on account of the fine *Repetitions* in them: these are what fell into my thoughts at present; and you have them in the same scatter'd manner, that they appear there: But one method of Improvement in this Translation, I took particular notice of, and in that, I can be a little more full and distinct.

Mr. Pope has a very great happiness in *Transplanting Beauties*. He often guides his Translation of *Homer* by some fine thought, or good expression in some other eminent writer; and this has been the occasion of several improvements in that work.

(a) *Paradise lost*, B. 5, 152.

Have you never observ'd, how he intermixes the Elegance of *Virgil*, with the Majesty of *Homer*? There are two (a) speeches of *Circe*, which have much of the air of that of *Proteus* in the fourth *Georgick*, and that of the *Sybil's* in the sixth *Æneid*. The speech of (b) *Tiresias* is improv'd from another of the *Sybil*; so also is the Prophetical speech in the (c) second *Odyssey*.

There are several Imitations (in a shorter compass) of natural Images introduc'd into *Homer* from the same treasury: Thus the following Lines:

(d) Down-sunk the heavy beast.

(e) *Læstrigonia's* gates arise distinct in air.

(f) — The shores like mists arise.

(g) And all above is Sky, and Ocean all around, &c.

Although the Translator adds these fine strokes from other Hands, they are brought in so naturally, that they seem to spring out of *Homer's* sentiment: And if an Instance or two shou'd be found

(a) B. 10, 385.

(b) B. 11, 130. *Æn.* 6, 87, &c.

(c) V. 203.

(d) B. 14, 572.

(e) B. 10, 93. *Æn.* 3, 206.

(f) B. 12, 201.

(g) B. 12, 474. *Æn.* 3, 193.

among them which may vary a little from the Original, it is only to add some apposite Thought, that is not only finer, but at the same time perfectly agreeable to the Subject. In such cases a Translator may demand the greater liberty of enlarging: as a *Flattering Resemblance* is always allow'd to Painters. I like that very ingenious Friend of your's, who calls the *French Translation of Tacitus, La belle Infidelle*: That piece, you know, tho' not very precise and constant to its Author, is the more beautiful, and the more engaging.

However 'tis seldom that Mr. *Pope* varies much in these additional Beauties; his Translation is generally faithful, even where it improves upon *Homer*: And he keeps the chief mark steadily in his Eye, tho' at the same time it admits the disglances of Light, from other objects. Thus you will scarce ever find him deviating from his Author in such cases: tho' this manner of improving him by imitation from others is vastly frequent; and often so plain, that one may trace it thro' whole scenes together: In particular, I cou'd almost imagine that Mr. *Pope* read over the *Eclogues* of *Virgil*, before he set about that Part of the Story, which lies between *Ulysses* and *Eumæus*; and I

fancy at least that I can trace the same Pastorals in almost every rural Scene in this Piece. If I am mistaken in this, 'tis the (a) resemblance of their beauties, which has deceiv'd me.

Sometimes we find the *Diction* beautified by such Resemblances, or the Sentiment improv'd from other hands. From the (b) *Sacred Writings* frequently; from parallel places in (c) *Homer* himself: From *Virgil*, *Horace*, &c. among the Ancients; and from (d) several of the most celebrated Moderns. In his *Speeches*, we meet with improvements from the Examples and Rules of the Orators of old; and many from our own Dramatick pieces. It wou'd not be difficult, for a Man of a good Taste, to discern the Air

(a) From *Virgil*, B. 14, 76. B. 5, 96. See also B. 2, 26. *Æn.* 3, 627. B. 2, 55. B. 3, 126. B. 4, 509. B. 6, 120, 197. B. 7, 309. B. 9, 313, 524. B. 10, 190, 226, 569. B. 11, 433, 434, &c.

(b) *Scripture*, B. 1, 483. B. 3, 424, 451. B. 4, 145, 438. B. 5, 288. B. 6, 235. B. 10, 591. B. 11, 239. B. 14, 109. And frequently in other places.

(c) *Iliad*, B. 11, 415. *Il.* 6, 41, &c.

Ovid, B. 4, 808. B. 10, 282. B. 13, 193. B. 14, 224. *Seneca*, B. 5, 573.

Horace, B. 10, 516, 556, 557. B. 14, 519.

(d) *Dryden*, B. 5, 80. B. 11, 531, &c.

Milton, B. 9, 66. B. 10, 331. B. 11, 725, &c.

some-

sometimes of *Dryden*, sometimes of (a) *Shakespear*, and at others of *Otway*, among the speeches in the *Odyssey*. But to go no farther, if you please only to compare some of the shorter passages with the Original, you will easily see how much they are improv'd by taking in these Side-lights.

Antiphaus, upon consulting the passages, as *Philypsus* pointed them out to him, at first did not think they deserv'd so much Commendation; but when he came to compare the original Lines from the *Odyssey*, with those of Mr. *Pope*, he was convinc'd of their beauty: It delighted him to see, what Foundation the Original gave for such a turn, and yet how new that turn was in the Translation; he found almost in every one of them some addition for the better, and scarce in any a deviation from the sense of *Homer*: It was *Homer's* sense, but the Expression of it was improv'd. I thank you, (says he turning to *Philypsus*) I thank you for this clearer view you have given me of the beauties of this Translation: beside these last, how many things have you repeated to me that are

(a) *Shakespear*, B. 9, 420. B. 10, 410, &c.

extremely just, pure, close, and *emphatical*? how many perfectly true and *natural*? how many handsomely beautified and *enlivened*? what *Pictures* of Things? what *Descriptions* of Actions? and what beautiful Expressions, both of the *thoughts*, and of the *passions* of the soul? In a word, what *improvements*, in some strokes, upon the greatest Genius of the World? —

Yes, added *Philypsus*, upon the greatest Genius of the World, assisted by the native use of the most Noble, and most Poetical of all Languages. Then, were we to consider the inconveniences on the other side; the general difficulties of Translation, and the difficulty of this in particular: How hard is it for a Poet to keep up his spirit and flame in another's Work? and how natural to flag in representing Thoughts not our own? To maintain the vigour of Language, and the poetic, warmth thorough so long a work, and to express the Soul of *Homer*, what a Genius does it require? what Spirit wou'd not sink under so large an undertaking? Yet does Mr. *Pope* hitherto sustain his Character in a handsome, equal manner; and we may safely promise ourselves the same of the remaining part of this work: As he enter'd upon this stage with the greatest expectations of all Men

I doubt not but he will leave it with Universal Applause.

But however excellent his performance is in the whole, I own with you that it has its faults, the common marks of Humanity: Yes, my *Antiphaus*, you convinc'd me the former Evening, that it is unavoidable for the greatest Genius not to fail sometimes. For my Part, (says *Antiphaus*) I shall make no Apologies for the freedoms with which I then us'd this excellent writer: Any thing of that kind might look odd to you from one, whose constant Sentiment you know to be this, *that* the kindest way of commending a writer, is to find fault with him now and then, at proper intervals. Does not this evince an Impartiality in your views, and add an air of Sincerity and Justice to those Commendations, which you give him? Your Criticks, who extol a Man Universally, and will not be satisfied with any thing under a perfect Character, without any the least defect, are a kind of *Romantick Criticks*; they are rather making an Hero, than describing a Man: They give you a Picture of something, which exists no-where but in their own Minds: and a complete Poet, according to their representations of such,

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will after all be only (what the Earl of *Mulgrave* calls it)

A faultless Monster, which the world ne'er saw.

Very true, says *Philypsus*; that sort of Criticks fail as much on one hand, as our more Modern Criticks have exceeded usually on the other: Indeed the former err on the good-natur'd side; yet both of them are very much to blame: For as it shews a mischievous sort of Frenzy to start errors, where there are really none; so an Obstinacy not to see faults where they are very evident, requires either a good degree of Ignorance, or a most inveterate Fondness.

I am intirely of your opinion, says *Antiphaus*; and since I find you in such a temper for it, I cou'd almost offer to shew you some farther remarks on that side of the Question. — Have you any other then? (says *Philypsus*.) A few, answered *Antiphaus*; but I beg one Evening more on this Topick. At present I shall only add my wishes, that we may constantly use this fair method, in reading any of the celebrated Pieces, which come out among us: Let us keep up the true balance, and not suffer ourselves to be prejudic'd, either by too
great

EVENING II. 99

great fondness, or too violent dislike.
This is the great Rule of Ancient Criticism: *Always to keep our Hearts open to the beauties of a Poem; and never to shut our Eyes against the defects of it.*



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EVERING H. 99

It is a pleasure to have you at the
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Mr. *Pope's* ODYSSEY.

EVENING III.

LMOST all the next day *Philypsus* was taken up in reflecting on what had been said at the close of their last meeting: he began to be not so uneasy as usual, in thinking that the faults of a favourite Poet were to be lookt into that Evening; he did not value Mr. *Pope* less than formerly, but he was thoroughly convinced that there was

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was not so much of severity in this Method, as he had once imagin'd. "No: (says he to himself) Let us view impartially, that we may rationally admire: Where before I was immediately in love with his Beauties, and fond of the Work, I now feel an equal Pleasure, and an equal Esteem; but it is in a different manner: I now seem to see the causes that move me to be pleas'd with those fine Passages, and feel a more just and manly Satisfaction in them: 'Tis true, the Soul is not hurried away with that vehemence of delight, as formerly; but the agreeable Sense I now have from them, is both more refin'd, and more lasting. How much is this Rational way of admiring to be preferred to the common, vulgar, passionate one? This is as a flash of Lightning; but the other is like the Light of the Day: 'Tis a serene, diffus'd, steady light, which at the same time that it discovers all Objects to us, is itself the most beautiful of any."

But then (continued he) how blind was I to the defects of this Poet? Has not *Antiphaus* shewn me several, which before I had no sense of, and which now appear evidently to be such? Indeed that over-light was more excuseable in reading the Works of this celebrated
Writer,

Writer, than it wou'd have been in any other: Reason may well lose something of her Liberty, when she is taken up with an Object every way so agreeable and engaging: However, for the future, I resolve to keep myself obstinately from being over-pleas'd with any thing; and to read his, as all other the best Pieces, in spite of all their Beauty, by that Rule which *Antiphaus* has laid down.

With these Thoughts he open'd the Translation which lay on his desk; and was very busy in considering it, when Company came in, and interrupted him for that Night. The next Day he employ'd himself in the same manner; This sort of view was new to him, and of course the more agreeable: Sometimes he met with a line or two, that disgusted him a little; but much more frequently was he struck with the Beauties of the Poem; and those he enjoy'd with a full Delight, as he found that Delight to be rational and just. This search drew him on strangely; he did not know how to leave off: And tho' *Antiphaus* stay'd for the Evening before he wou'd disturb him, he found him still closely employ'd at it: "My *Philypsus*, (says he) I'm glad to see you engag'd thus in the *Odyssey*: What new light shall we have into the excellen-

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excellencies of this writer? Have not you been collecting other Beauties out of the Translation? — I have met with several other, reply'd *Philypsus*: So many indeed, that it wou'd be almost endless to collect them. But to tell you the Truth, my business was quite contrary to what you imagine: I was upon a more difficult task; I was endeavouring to try what Faults I cou'd discover in it. That is by much the more difficult, says *Antiphlaus*: The few Faults of that Piece are scarce discernible among such a superior number of Beauties: How seldom do we perceive the disagreeableness of a single feature, in a Face that is very taking in the whole? Well, but have you been able to overcome this Difficulty? Can you discover any thing farther of this kind in the *Odyssey*? Very little, answer'd *Philypsus*: There is but one point yet, which has afforded me any number of Instances; and that is a Fault directly opposite to what you particularly insisted on in our first Conversation on this Subject.

It was then, you know, that we consider'd several Points in which Mr. Pope appears to Elevate and Flourish too much: Have you never observ'd, on the contrary, that there are a few *Lower*

nesses

EVENING III. 105

nesses in his Writings ; and that he sometimes sinks into a Diction, which borders upon the *Mean* and *Vulgar* ? I have, reply'd *Antiphaus*, in some few lines : but if you have made any remarks of that kind, I beg rather to see those of your observation.

The two Friends were always ready to comply with the desires of each other : *Philypsus*, as usual, without prefacing or debating the matter, immediately shew'd him the following Lines :

- (a) A Gallant leader, and—a man I lov'd.
- (b) The *old man* early rose, walk'd forth, and sat
On polish'd stone before his palace gate.
- (c) Or has Hell's Queen an empty image sent,
That wretched I might ev'n my joys lament ?
- (d) Struck at the word my very heart was dead.
- (e) *Euryclea*, who, great *Ops*, thy lineage shar'd,
And watch'd all Night, all Day : a faithful guard.
- (f) They led me to a good Man, and a wife.
- (g) And sure he will, for wisdom never lyes.

(a) B. 10, 259. κ'. 225.

(b) B. 3, 523. γ'. 405.

(c) B. 11, 258. λ'. 212.

(d) B. 10, 588. κ'. 496.

(e) B. 2, 393. β'. 345.

(f) B. 14, 392. ξ'. 359.

(g) B. 3, 25. γ'. 20.

In

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In the note upon this line (says *Philypsus*) we have a couplet repeated from the *Iliad*, which, I fear, is of the same stamp.

(a) Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My soul detests him as the gates of Hell.

I must confess, says *Antiphaus*, that the Lines you have repeated, carry a mean air with them; but possibly what looks like a fault, may really be a beauty in some of them.

Some subjects require a simplicity of stile: Beside Mr. *Pope* is to follow *Homer*; and shou'd *Homer* use an humble stile in these places, even to appearance improperly, yet one shou'd be apt to look upon it, as a sufficient justification of his translator.

For my part (reply'd *Philypsus*) I have always thought, that there is a wide difference between an *humble* and a *mean* stile; but (not to urge any thing of that kind) in the greater part of the instances just repeated, I am certain, there is not a sufficient likeness between the manner of the Original and the Translation.

I shall only except the two last, which are indeed plain and proverbial in the

(a) *Iliad* 9, 412. i. 313.

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Greek. There is a simplicity, as Mr. Pope tells us in his notes, a noble simplicity, in the diction; and which, in my opinion, is not equally kept up in the *English*: but those I shall not insist upon.

As for the rest, that mean close of the first of these Lines, is in *Homer* an (a) handsome sentiment, deliver'd in a sounding verse: and the meanest Expression in the second, (b) is poetical in the Original. The same will hold, in some degree, of the other Lines.

Indeed where *Homer* leads the way, the case is very different: I cannot say how far it might be justifiable, to blame a Translator for following his Author: and it was for that very reason, that I shou'd not have taken any notice of the *delightful History of the Coat and Cloak*, which is given us in one of the longest speeches in the Fourteenth *Odyssey*.

But we have several instances of *additional Lownesses*: I observ'd particularly that they were pretty frequent, when the Scene is in *Ithaca*: Thus:

His task it was the wheaten loaves to lay,

(c) And from the banquet take the bowls away.

(a) ——— Πολίτης δεχαμὸν ἀνδρῶν,
Ὅς μοι κῆδ' ἰς ἐτάρῳ ἦν, κελύτατος τε. κ'. 225.

(b) ——— Γεῖνι' ἰππότης Νέσως. γ'. 405.

(c) B. 14, 507. ξ'. 455.

Again;

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Again;

But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed [bleed.
(a) For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall

Again;

(b) Is this, returns the Prince, for mirth a time?
When lawless gluttons riot, mirth's a crime, &c.

The meanness here (interpos'd *Antiphau*s) is occasion'd by a just design; that of writing in a stile agreeable to the simplicity of the subject: In several other places, it has a less excuseable rise; I mean, the labour and difficulty of Rhyme. The Poet's being in haste to get this drudgery off his Hands, sometimes draws him into the use of Expressions which are flat and contemptible. Thus, I believe, we may account for the Lownesses in these Couplets:

While with my single ship, *advent'rous* I

(c) Go forth, the manners of *yon men* to try.

Mean while the Gods the dome of *Vulkan* throng,

(d) *Apollo* comes, and *Neptune* comes along.

(a) B. 1, 480. d. 378.

(b) B. 2, 347. β. 310.

(c) B. 9, 202. i. 174.

(d) B. 8, 362. θ. 322.

—When

EVENING III. 109

When great *Alcides* rose,
(a) And *Euritus*, who *bad the Gods be foes*.

You need only read over one single passage, to guess how frequently the sense may be less'n'd and broke by this means; and how often we are put off with low, wretched words, merely for want of a more generous Rhyme.

You remember the Speech of *Ulysses*, when ship-wreck'd in his voyage from *Calypso's* Island; 'tis transferr'd, you know, by *Virgil* into his storm; and both are very strong, and animated. This is the passage which I beg leave to read to you from the Translation before us.

(a) Happy ! thrice happy ! who in battle slain
Prest in *Atrides'* cause the *Trojan* plain :
Oh ! had I dy'd before *that well-fought wall*,
Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall ;
(Such as was that when show'rs of jav'lines fled
From conqu'ring *Troy* around *Achilles* dead)
All *Greece* had paid my solemn fun'ral *then*,
And spread my glory with the sons of men.
A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead.

A mighty wave ru'h'd o'er him as he spoke,
The raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke ;

(a) B. 8, 256. θ, 225.

Οἱ δ' αὖ δαυδά τοισιν ἐπέζεον περὶ τόξων.

(b) Od. 5, 393. ε. 306.

Swept

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Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn,
Far on the swelling surge the chief was borne:
While by the howling tempest rent in twain,
Flew sail and sail-yards ratling o'er the main.
Long press'd he heav'd beneath the weighty wave,
Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest *Calypso* gave;
At length emerging, from his nostrils wide,
And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide, &c.

The meanness of this passage, in comparison either of the original *Greek*, or of *Virgil's* imitation of it, appears to be in a great measure owing to a poverty of Rhyme. It has given a low turn to the whole passage; and that *lowness* is still most evident in the *terminating* of the Lines.

There are a Thousand other things (resumed *Philypsus*) which contribute to the meanness of stile; even a desire to avoid it, will occasion it: 'Tis not uncommonly seen that the straining to elevate a point, will make it really the more mean and ridiculous: as nothing shews the littleness of a dwarf, more than strutting.

One wou'd be apt to suspect this to be the case in the following verses:

(a) There figs Sky-dy'd a purple hue disclose—

(a) B. 11, 727. λ'. 588.

There

EVENING III. 111

There *dangling pears* exalted scents unfold,
And *yellow apples ripen into gold.*

And in these other :

(a) *Lur'd* with the *vapour* of the fragrant feast,
In *rush'd* the suitors with *voracious haste.*

Sometimes one single word will lessen the sentiment, and break in upon the dignity of verse. Thus, where the Greek calls *Memnon*, *The glorious Son of Aurora*, we find it in the Translation only (b) *Swarthy Memnon*. This, by sinking below the Original: it may be as faulty to stick too close to it. (c) *Hog-herd* and *Cow-keeper* (says one of the Notes) are not to be used in our Poetry, tho' there are no finer words, than those which answer them, in the Greek language: for the same reason I shou'd think that the use of the word (d) *Str*, which occurs so often in the Tenth Book, might be varied; and perhaps some few other expressions of the same nature.

(a) B. 1, 190. d. 144.

δ' ἤλδον μιν ἡρὲς ἀγίνορες. —

(b) B. 4, 256. Ἡὲς φαείνης ἀγλαῶ ὕμῳ. d. 188.

(c) B. 14. Note 1.

(d) B. 10, 277, 338, 459, &c,

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In general, what do you think (a) of *Scudding before the gales to Pylos?* of a (b) *fore Soul?* and of (c) *Sacrificing throngs?* Are not these Expressions too low for verse? And is it not too low and rustick even for prose, to talk of *the* (d) *swelling loins of a Goddess,* or of a *Nymph's* (e) *pacing along the Sand?*

Your Instances, reply'd *Antiphaus*, sufficiently shew, that (beside the inconvenience of Rhyme) Mr. *Pope* does sometimes, without that wrong Biass, deviate into a meanness of Expression: They are directly contrary to his usual Spirit. There is a case (says *Philypsus*) just come into my Head, which ought not to be forgot; we may see by it, on the other hand, how much this Gentleman can improve upon expressions in the Original, beyond the other translators of *Homer*. That venerable old Poet uses a phrase which, tho' I do not believe it to have been mean in his times, does most certainly sound so in the present: In speaking of a Person intirely lost in melan-

(a) B. 3, 221. γ'. 180.

(b) B. 3, 252.

(c) B. 3, 17. γ'. 12.

(d) B. 5, 296.

(e) Ibid. 191.

EVENING III. 113

choly, he says, that he was continually
 (a) *eating up his own Mind*: So great a
 Man as *Cicero* has endeavour'd to give
 this in (b) *Latin*; but with that usual
 unhappiness, which attended him in his
 Poetry. In another part of *Homer*, we
 have the same manner of Expression;
 and it is as meanly translated by several
 Hands. The Passage is a part of *Jupi-*
ter's Speech to *Juno*; in which, to set
 cut the violence of her hatred to *Priam*
 and his family, the God says, that *she*
wou'd (c) *eat them, or swallow them up*
quick. *Atius Labeo*, a wretched, tho' a
 Court writer, translated several Books of
 the *Iliad* into *Latin*; and if we may guess
 at the rest, by the only Verse left us of
 that Work (which, as it happens, an-
 swers this very Line) we have no great
 Reason to lament the loss of it: This an
 old Scholiast has preserv'd, for a taste of
 the Performance:

Crudum manduces Priamum, Priamique pisinnos.

Labeo, as Mr. *Pope* observes in his Note
 upon the (d) place, is equall'd by *Ogilby*:

(a) Ὁν θυμὸν κατέδων. Il. ζ'. 202.

(b) Ipse suum cor edens. *Tusc. Quæst. lib. 3.*

(c) Ὁμὸν βεβρωμένοις Πρίαμον, Πριάμοιο τε παῖδας.
 Il. δ'. 35.

(d) Il. B. 4, 56.

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Both King and People thou wou'dst eat alive:

As is *Ogilby* by *Hobbes* ;

And eat up *Priam*, and his People all.

Such a general meanness in giving us this Expression of the *Greek* Poet, must make us look upon Mr. *Pope* with the greater regard, if he can keep it from sinking in *English* : This he has not only done, but gives it to us in an handsome poetical turn :

Let *Priam* bleed ! if yet thou thirst for more,
(a) Bleed all his sons, and *Ilion* float with gore !

This expresses the full sentiment ; and that, with an air of greatness and majesty in it : 'Tis now Language not unfit to be put into the mouth of *Jupiter*.

Antiphaus was extremely pleas'd to see so great a change in *Philypsus* ; and that (sudden as it was) it had not affected him in the usual manner. As Men generally run from one extreme to the other, he was afraid, that the making him sensible of the Faults of the *Tran*

(a) Il. B. 4, 56.

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lator, might give him some distaste to his beauties: but as he found he was fallen into the Indifferent just manner of Reading, he thought he might now safely go on with him farther in the same way. "The defect (says he) which you have prov'd in some particulars on the Translator is sufficiently recompenc'd by his Flame and Spirit, and the general beauty of his diction: 'Tis from this Quarter that I am still the most apprehensive of Faults in the Work before us. Surely, says *Philypsus*, you have nothing more to produce on that head! Yes, (reply'd *Antiphaus*) I have a word or two to add to what we observ'd upon it the other Night. There are a sort of Verses, very frequent in our modern writers, which run very smoothly off the Tongue; the stream is easy, but there is neither depth nor clearness in it: The truth of it is, they are undisturb'd with Meaning; and their calmness is *as the calmness of the Night, which is dark withal*. If I might have leave, I should call such verses as these, *Un-ideal Verses*; and I fear there are some few of them to be met with in the *Odyssey*.

Pray observe what an unthinking harmony there is in this couplet, which comes first into my Head;

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(a) Soft he reclines along the murm'ring Seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.

And what a Panegyrick in this ?

—— Ev'ry Eye
(b) Gaz'd, as before, some brother of the sky.

I will read you but a few more :

(c) The Royal Palace to the Queen convey.

And

(d) — Plan with all thy arts the scene of fate:

(e) Of deathful arts expert, his Lord employs
The ministers of blood in dark surprise.

But among all of them, upon comparing the Original and the Translation, this seems to be the *non-pariel* :

(f) Then warp my voyage on the Southern gales,
O'er the warm *Lybian* wave to spread my sails.

(a) B. 6, 284. ζ'. 236.

(b) B. 8, 18. Ἐθνήσαντο ἰδόντες. θ'. 17.

(c) B. 2, 378. β'. 336.

(d) B. 13, 442. ν'. 387.

(e) B. 4, 708.

(f) B. 4, 104. δ'. 85. Καὶ Λιβύην.

Mr.

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Mr. Pope has had a Critique on some Lines of his *Iliad*, which is chiefly taken up in discovering, or making *False English* of them: If this can neither darken the Line, nor affect the Sense considerably, it seems to me not to be of any concern in Comparison of the former *finesses*. The ancient Criticks were much kinder on this head: and 'tis hence that we owe many of our Figures in *Rhetorick*, to Peccadillo's against *Grammar*. I am the most unfit in the World to determine in this Case, because I have always found myself as much averse to the *Grammatical* sort of Criticism, as I am fond of the *Poetical*: but I am apt to think, that there are not many faults of this kind justly chargeable on the *Odyssey*. Of the few which I have by chance observ'd, the chief are to be met with in the close of his verses: Thus it occurs, if I remember right, twice or thrice in that short passage, which I repeated to you the other Evening, on the Transformation of *Ulysses*. This Rhyme, *Philypsus*, is a terrible Thing: it has spoil'd more Lines——Good *Antiphaus*, (cry'd *Philypsus* hastily) be not so inveterate against Rhyme: does not it soften and beautify verse? and turn poetry into a sort of musick to a good Ear? — I am not universally an Enemy to Rhyme,

F 4

you

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you know, (return'd *Antiphaus*.) It does very well in *Odes* and *Sonnets* to *Armida*: But for any thing very solid or pathetick, surely 'tis an Ornament too contemptible, as well as too much abus'd. One of the first Pieces in *Latin Rhyme* I know of, that famous *Stanza* of *Adrian*, does well enough; 'twas spoke out of pure Gaiety, and good Humour: but to introduce it gravely into poetry, as it was the effect of a miserable deprav'd taste, so will the productions of those Ages shew how happily it succeeded. The *Runick Lays* (answer'd *Philypsus*) I do not pretend to admire: but surely you will allow it to have succeeded better in our Language, than it did in the hands of that monkish Clan of Poets. 'Tis true (says *Antiphaus* smiling) we have not improv'd it yet into *middle Rhymes*, and some other of their excellencies. Perhaps it wou'd have been happy too for our Poetry, if we had confin'd this *Musick*, as you call it, to its proper subjects. How wretchedly does it sound in some of our Tragedies? In such, all the Actors to me seem rather to be *playing at Crambo* with one another, than endeavouring in the least to affect the Audience. With all the violence that Mr. *Dryden* wrote in this cause, you see he was forc'd to recant at last: The

only

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only true reason of his persisting in it at all is, I believe, very obvious, tho' the last he wou'd have given us: It was then the Humour of the Age; Mr. *Dryden*, every one knows, was but too often obliged to write for Money; and then his business was to please his Customers.

And now I have mention'd Mr. *Dryden*, it may be worth the inquiry, to consider a little more particularly, what that writer has said on this subject; as he must be allow'd, on all hands, to have been one of the nicest Judges of Harmony, one of the greatest Masters of Versification, and one of the best Poetical Criticks in general, that our Nation has ever produced.

In reading what he has given us in different places on this head, 'tis easy to see, that he very much observes a difference between *Rhyme*, in the genuine sense of the word, by which he always intends the true Harmony of Verse; and *Rhyme*, in the lowest sense, or that jingle and playing with sounds, in which the Moderns have exceeded all the other Ages of the World; and which indeed, since the last revival of Letters, has bid fair for the *Universal Monarchy* in Poetry.

Tho' *Dryden* understood Rhyme in the first sense, as well as most Writers, and

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generally stoop'd to the use of it in the other : yet I am inclined to believe, that he always saw through the Defects and Inconveniencies, not to say the Barbarity and Childishness of it. Indeed one might be justified in saying even this ; for *Dryden* himself follows *Vossius* in calling it expressly, (a) *A childish sort of verse* ; and says, that some *Rhyming Hexameters*, which may be discovered in *Homer*, were probably the remains of a *Barbarous Age* : “ *Virgil* (adds that writer) had them in such abhorrence, that he would rather make a false *Syntax*, than what we call a Rhyme. — The nicer Ears in *Augustus's* Court cou'd not pardon him for a Line, in which he had only dropt something like it : so that the principal Ornament of Modern Poetry, was accounted deformity by the *Latins* and *Greeks*.”

After observing that the *Greek* tongue falls naturally into *Iambicks*, and the *Latin* into *Heroick* verse, he calls all our little arts of Rhyming, *Barbarities* : And adds, that “ As *Age* brings Men back into the state and infirmities of *Childhood*, upon the fall of their Empire, the *Romans* doted into Rhyme.”

(a) Preface to *Virgil's Pastorals*, p. 95.

What you have now read to me (interpos'd *Philypsus*) shews sufficiently, that Mr. *Dryden* cou'd give up an old Friend, and abuse him heartily behind his back: That writer cou'd speak the severest things of Rhyme, when he was got into a vein of Prose-writing: But the present ill treatment he gives to it, may perhaps be on some particular Occasion; and in some Cases, I cannot deny that Rhyme may be a very improper Ornament.

No, (return'd *Antiphæus*) he is here speaking of Rhyme in general: If you wou'd know his sentiments of Rhyme, more particularly in relation to the present purpose, and its use in translating an *Heroick Poem*; as it happens, there is a remarkable passage wrote by him on this very occasion: it was in his more advanc'd Judgment; and particularly, as he himself informs us, when he was in his great Climacterick. He is speaking of *Hannibal Caro's* Translation of the *Æneid*: "The performance, (a) says he, is very mean, tho' that Poet took the advantage of writing in Blank-verse, and freed himself from the shackles of Modern

(a) Dedication to his *Æneid*, p. 417.

“ Rhyme. I will not make a digression
 “ here, (proceeds that writer) tho’ I am
 “ strangely tempted to it: but will only
 “ say, that he who can write *well* in
 “ Rhyme, may write *better* in Blank-
 “ verse. Rhyme is certainly a constraint
 “ even to the *best* Poets, and those who
 “ make it with *most ease*: — What it
 “ adds to *sweetness*, it takes away from
 “ *sense*; and he who loses the *least* by it,
 “ may be call’d a *Gainer*. It often makes
 “ us *swerve* from an Author’s meaning:
 “ as if a mark be set up for an Archer
 “ at a great distance, let him aim as ex-
 “ actly as he can, the least Wind will
 “ take his Arrow, and divert it from the
 “ White.”

Thus far Mr. Dryden. And his opi-
 nion weighs the more with me in this
 case; because, if any thing, we might
 expect that he shou’d be prejudic’d in fa-
 vour of Rhyme; but the reason of the
 thing, you see, prevailed over all other
 considerations: He goes so far as to con-
 demn his own manner of Writing, rather
 than suffer such a corruption to pass with-
 out a severe Censure; and to that end,
 very generously gives up his Practice to
 his Judgment.

Indeed I know of but one Argument
 (and that the merest *Circle* in the World)

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to support the present practice of writing in rhyme; we must *use* it, because 'tis all the *fashion*. We who were never so far infected, can laugh heartily at some of the *French* for rhyming throughout their Comedies; yet Rhyme in Tragedy was very becoming among us, in an Age not the least knowing and polite. Disuse has made us see the flatness and inconvenience of that Ornament; and nothing reads more insipid, than the best Pieces left us in that way. Tell me, *Philypsus*, why do we so much dislike those Beauties of their kind in our Age?

I believe, says *Philypsus*, 'tis as you observe. (Now the taste is alter'd, and the fashion worn off; we can look back, and perceive with ease the prejudice of that beauty, where the end is to stir up the Soul by true representations of Nature: To raise (a) *Terror or Compassion*, is the business of the tragick Poet; and to endeavour to raise either with Rhyme, and all its Harmony, seems to me more

(a) La Tragedie roulât sur deux passions: Scavoir la terreur, qui doivent donner les suites funestes du vice; & la compassion, qu'inspire la vertu persecutée & patiente. *Archieu. de Cambray, Sur l'Eloquence,*

proper

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proper for an *Italian* Opera, than an *English* Tragedy.

Very true, says *Antiphaus*; and do you not judge it as absurd, where any other Passions are to be mov'd, as well as Terror and Compassion?—Undoubtedly, reply'd *Phylp*.—And is it not the business of the Epick, to awake the Soul? to raise in it an esteem for Virtue, and an hatred to Vice? In a word, to move the Passions, particularly those very Passions you have mention'd? Why then is Rhyme, which you disallow in Tragedy, to be thought useful and commendable in the Epick?—As for moving the Passions, (says *Phylp*) Rhyme, I allow you, is of no use in either; but it is a fine Ornament, which may be more proper in the one than in the other: In Dramatick Pieces the Persons should be supposed to speak extempore; but there can be no such thing conceiv'd in an Epick Poem.—I beg your Pardon, (says *Antiphaus*) tho' not so strongly, yet this is often suppos'd in an Epick, as well as in Tragedy: Do you think that *Homer* is telling you a story, or *Ulysses*, when we are got into *Phæacia*? In the 2d *Æneid*, have you not several intermediate Ideas, which agree not with a Reader, but a Spectator?—Yes, Sir, in

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all active Poems, as well as Tragedy, the Author is to disappear, as much as possible: the greatest Art of them is to deceive us into an imagination, that we hear the very persons speaking, and see them acting before us. *In ipsis Omnia sunt oculis.* Every Poem the nearer it comes to this, the more perfect it is. Consider too, how much of any good Epick piece is purely Dramatick: 'tis scarce to be imagin'd, for Instance, how small a number of Lines in the *Æneid* are properly *Virgil's*: they almost all belong to the Persons engag'd in the Poem; and where the Lines are spoke, we see the attitudes and behaviour of the particular Persons, and receive the words from their Mouth.

Much of what you urge is true (answer'd *Philypsus*); but yet you must allow, that Rhyme sounds unnatural in Tragedy, and agreeable in pieces of the other kind. That is, as we were just saying, (reply'd *Antiphaus*) because in these 'tis at present all the Mode: let the fashion alter, and this beauty will look as false in one, as it has already in the other. This Taste, which had been too much establish'd by the Revivers of Poetry in *Provence* and *Tuscany*, led away the first Poet of our Nation, who attempted

tempted any thing toward an Epick; and probably we shou'd to this Day have thought it the only proper for our Language, had it not happily been disdain'd by the great Genius of *Milton*, who chose rather to follow the true old *Roman* manner. It was *Milton* who flung off our Fetters; and we may venture to say in the propheticall manner of a very good Writer now living, *that (a) He shall for ever be honour'd as our deliverer from that bondage.* What a pity it is he did not suffer us still to continue in it, since we are so fond of our Chains! How happy wou'd it have been to have given up the Nervousness and Majesty of his Poem, for *Prior's* Ease, or the Sweetness of *Waller*! I know not what the world may say to it; but, for my part, when I read in the Bishop of *Sarum's* History, *That Paradise Lost is a noble Piece, (b) tho' the Author affected to write it in blank verse:* it always puts me in mind of the Gentleman in the monkish Ages of Poetry, who said of *Virgil's* *Æneid*, that it was really a very good Poem, and wanted nothing but the *(c) Sweet's of Rhyme*, to

(a) Mr. Watts's *Horæ Lyr.* Pref. p. 31.

(b) Bishop Burnet's Hist. of his own Times, p. 163.

(c) See the *Spectator*, Vol. I. Numb. 60.

make it the most perfect Work in its kind.

Well, (says *Philypsus*) I own, there is the greater majesty in blank verse; but you will own too, that the other is the more beautiful. Yes, (reply'd *Antiphaus*) but for that very reason is Blank-verse undoubtedly the more proper for the *Epick*; as that is the most majestick kind of Poetry imaginable. And even as to the Sound, those musical returns (if allow'd to be true Beauties) are more than balanc'd by the *Dead Manner* introduc'd with them into Poetry; what I mean, is that *perpetual likeness* in the cadence and turn of the Periods: How frequently do they fall in several repeated Couplets, without any variety, or relief to the Ear? You will sometimes meet with a Rhyme-Poem, all the Lines of which run off intirely with the same pauses; the stream always equal, and so level that you can scarce perceive it to move: What do you think of each Couplet, chiming on in the same stops and measure, with the most tedious uniformity of sound imaginable? — That is the fault of the Poet, not of the use of Rhyme, says *Philypsus*: I could name several of our Poets who drop that Uniformity. To go no farther, the Poem
we

we were dipping in t'other day, with Mr. *Oldisworth's* name to it, has a good deal of variety in its periods. I own it, says *Antiphauts*, in that and several other pieces. You must have heard me commend the Translator of *Vida's Poeticks*, for this, among his several other Excellencies. But after all, let our Poets manage the cadence and structure in Rhyme-verse never so artfully, it will fall vastly short of Blank in these particulars: Indeed Rhyme is a natural Enemy to them; it breaks and disturbs both the structure and the cadence. The very sound of any periods the best contriv'd, will convince one of this: when a person of a good Ear is reading them, you may observe, that he endeavours to drop the Rhyme, and lose the gingle of it, as much as possible: and when the sound of it is not sufficiently kept under, you will find, that it spoils the continuance, and occasions too great a break in the period.

You may see by what I have been saying, that this charge is not design'd against *single Couplets*; the corruption in this respect evidently ceases, where there are no periods to be varied. To determine precisely where it will grow prejudicial, wou'd be difficult, and is not very material:

material : 'Tho' I know not but what it might be uneasy to a very nice Ear, to have only four Lines together with regular Rhyme : and possibly on this very account, the Stanza but of two Couplets has generally unequal Rhymes, (the Second Line answering the Fourth) and that of Three varies in the last Couplet. However forc'd or delicate this observation may be thought, one thing I cou'd assert with some degree of Confidence : I dare say, any one of a good Ear, who reads only ten Lines of the best Rhyme-Verse, and an equal Number of Milton's true harmonious Verses, upon this view, will find a nobler sound, and that variety (which is necessary to the beauty of Periods, and to the pleasure of a Reader) much stronger, and much fuller in the latter.

What has been said of *Couplets*, may in a great Measure be said of *Odes*, which consist of proper *Stanzas* : As these come next to Couplets for shortness, they have scarce room, singly, for the tedious Uniformity we have been complaining of : and unless the *Ode* be long, they do not produce it by their *Number*. There may be a variety too of singular use in this sort of Poetry, where a person can run these *Stanza's* artfully into one another ;

ther; if the interweaving of them be not so frequent and equal, as to bring in that very Satiety we wou'd avoid. Thus qualified, Rhyme is, at least, very tolerable in *Odes*: And even in *Pindaricks*, the most extensive and lofty of any, the prejudice of it is not pressing: There is so great a Liberty (I mean, in our common *Pindaricks*) of varying the Numbers, and of fixing or deferring the Rhyme at pleasure. But above all, in single Couplets, Rhyme is most allowable; and in them indeed, I should think, it deserves the preference to Blank-verse: it may please the Ear more, and cannot do that mischief, for which it is chiefly to be avoided in all large Pieces, and all compositions of a nobler sort. In this respect, it is with Poetry, as it is in Building; a Pile (*a*) compos'd of Stones, cut just alike, all equal and uniform, and disposed alike, without any thing either great or beautiful in the whole, will yield to one of a good design, form'd of materials various and unequal, and perhaps ruder, or less exactly polish'd: At the same time, the particulars of which it is made taken singly, will evidently exceed

(a) See Dr. Trapp's Preface to his *Æneid*, p. 45.

the others. Thus we find, in a walk of Trees, that the two Opposites, when cut to answer each other, look better, than if they were in disagreeing Figures; but a Wood, or a Garden full of Trees, all in one Figure, wou'd be rather displeasing to the Eye than otherwise: In the two similar Figures, we should have a pleasing *Uniformity*; but in this large repeated view of the same thing, we shou'd lose that *Variety*, which a late very ingenious Writer has shewn to be inseparable from the Idea of Beauty; and which the mind seems to require the more, as the number of Objects is increas'd.

It is a known Rule in versification, that the Second Rhyme ought not to resemble the sound of those in a preceding Couplet. When it is carried to the farthest, it will not bear beyond the Third Line; and even that is run generally into an *Alexandrine*, that in some degree the turn of the Period and the Numbers may be varied. Now why shou'd it not be as disagreeable to have a perpetual uniformity of Periods, as a continued likeness of Rhyme? The latter no Man in the World will allow to be proper; nay, it cou'd not be borne with, only for three Couplets together.

But,

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But, supposing Rhyme a real beauty in Poems of an higher kind, which I am persuaded it is not; (to speak nothing of its uniform returns, and the havock which it makes in the Periods, nor even of the *diversion* it gives the thoughts of the *Reader*, and its general disservice to pieces that should be solid and pathetick: to omit all this) the single reason which introduc'd this question is, as I take it, sufficient to determine it. If Rhyme is exceedingly apt to mislead a *Writer*, often to cramp, and sometimes to spoil his sentiments; its benefits, as being only benefits of Sound, will be far from balancing those inconveniencies of so much superior a nature. This at least is the Case with Rhyme: it gives either an impertinent pleasure, or an unnecessary trouble to a writer; and at the same time that it distracts his attention, it increases his difficulties: in a word, 'tis a false bent put upon the thoughts of the Poet; and, in the best, proves frequently a counter-bias too strong for their good Sense.

I own, it is with a strange readiness that people fall generally into this taste; it has almost *universal consent* on its side: and the few Assertors of the Liberty of Verse meet with little Praise, or even Coun-

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Countenance, from the World. How many Persons would fly into unreasonable Heats upon hearing half that I have said to you? I should beg the favour of any such Person, who wou'd please to be disobliged in it, to ask himself what argument there is for this practise, which has so generally obtained in the modern World? If he can find none, 'tis easy to bring the matter more home, and to ask farther, whether he thinks Rhyme wou'd be proper in the *Odyssey* and *Æneid*? and then I should be glad to hear what Reasons can be assigned, why it should be improper in a *Latin* or *Greek*, and not so in an *English Epick*?—Yes, *Philypsus*, I am persuaded it is nothing but use, which makes it supportable at present; and whenever the world recovers itself from this agreeable Stupor, it will then appear as ridiculous to the Reader, as it has been inconvenient to the Poet. This I really imagine, that in future, and perhaps far distant Ages, the Criticks, when they look back on any of the best Poems of this sort, (which may be deliver'd down to them from their Ancestors) will be at a loss to give any account of their Manner of Writing. When they read Mr. *Pope's Iliad* or *Odyssey*, they will often applaud the greatness of his thoughts, and often admire the

the

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the happiness of his diction, as far as the present Language shall be preserv'd to them. They will honour his remains; and when they look towards his Ashes with veneration, "There (will they say) lies the Great Man, who in ancient Days is said to have shewn the noblest Genius for Poetry in the World: what beauties do we discover in him, thro' all this rust of time, and so much obsolete language? He is every way to be commended as far as any of our ancient Poets are; only he fell into the common fault of those Ages, and always shews that trifling labour of making the last syllable of every alternate line, sound like the close of the foregoing: Bating this insignificant taste of those times, how much is he to be praised, and how much to be admired?"

Might it not have been much better, and much more for their honour, for Mr. *Dryden* in his time, or Mr. *Pope* in ours, to have broke thorough this tedious Slavery; and to have freed the World from a taste so irrational and barbarous?— I own it to you, I have something of an Impatience in me to see this great Transformation in Poetry set on foot: I wish it cou'd be brought about in our Time; and

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and if not, almost envy those, who in future Ages shall be so happy, as to see Men awake from this Lethargy of Verse: when all the Poets shall conspire to restore strength to their Sentiments, and nerves and variety to their Numbers: when the Writers shall throw aside all those idle Arts and Tricks, which we now play with Sounds; and true Harmony shall flourish, without inroaching upon true Sense.

(a) O might I live to hail the glorious day,
And sing loud *Paeans* thro' the crowded way,
When in triumphant state the *British* Muse,
True to herself, shall *barb'rous* aid refuse;
And in the *Roman* Majesty appear,
Which none know better, and none come so near!

Philypsus began to be moved by what his friend had urg'd on this head: I confess (says he) you are a powerful adversary to Rhyme; but you must allow one some time to get a thorough dislike of a thing, which has once been so agreeable. There are some allowances too to be made in the present case; I believe, no man is less embarras'd by the use of

(a) Conclusion of the *Earl of Roscommon's* Essay on translated Verse.

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Rhyme than Mr. *Pope*; and his command in Writing will take off much of your objection at present: tho' I own your reasoning against this Fashion in general, to be very strong and forcible. However, this Writer has a peculiar happiness in it, and his Language flows with the greatest ease in the World. The whole work seems to be uniform in this respect: and I believe you can scarce instance a verse in it, which does not run off smooth and handsomely. 'Tis true, (says *Antiphaus*) there are very few in it that are harsh, or any way faulty, either in Sound or Composition: two or three which I remember of that kind, are scarce worth repeating.—Yes, (interrupted *Philypsus*) if you have observ'd any such, let us have them. What do you think of this? says *Antiphaus*:

(a) And to the deaf Woods wailing breathes her woes.

Or of these;

(b) Rich Tapestry, stiff with in-woven gold.

(c) By what strange fraud *Egythus* wrought, relate,
(By force he cou'd not) such an hero's fate.

(a) B. 6, 138.

(b) B. 4, 406.

(c) B. 3, 311.

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No bird of air, no dove of swiftest wing
Shuns the dire rocks: in vain she cuts the skies,

(a) The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies.

(b) I climb a cliff—

To learn if ought of *mortal* works appear,
Or chearful voice of *mortal* strike the ear.

(c) *Deem* not unjustly by my *doom* oppress'd, &c.

These Lines are somewhat faulty in the sound, or position of the words; but I only mention them; it wou'd be frivolous to make particular remarks on them: You may see, *Philypsus*, that my stock is quite out when I sink so low: my task this Evening was difficult enough to me; and indeed 'tis not easy for any one to find many faults in a Piece which comes from such excellent hands. Have you nothing farther to observe on it? (says *Philypsus*) I think I have heard you speak formerly of some Contradictions.—That particular I had forgot, says *Antiphaus*; there are indeed some seeming *Contrarieties* in this work; these are of two sorts; one, in which the Translator is *contrary* to his Original:

(a) B. 12. 78.

(b) B. 10. 172.

(c) B. 1. 86.

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and the other, when the Translation seems to have some little Circumstances in it contradictory to one another.

Since you mention the thing, I believe I can recollect a passage or two, in which the sense is press'd so far, or so much alter'd from what it was, that they seem directly opposite to the Original. When the *Grecian* Commanders were drawn into *Troy*, in the famous Wooden Horse; the Enemy, upon suspicion of the design, us'd an artifice to make them cry out by surprize, if there were really any persons conceal'd in it. *Homer* tells us, that all of them sat very silent: only *Anticlus*, one of the Officers, was just ready to answer; when *Ulysses*, who sat by him, stopt his mouth by force, prevented his making any noise, and so preserv'd all their Lives. Instead of which the Translation says, that this *Anticlus*,

(a) ——— Unable to controul,
Spoke loud the languish of his yearning soul.

In another place, where in *Homer* we hear of an Hero falling in the defence of

(a) B. 4. 388. d'. 287.

his Country, *under the Walls of his native City*; the Translator, in drawing out the Circumstances of it, speaks as if it was (a) *on a foreign shore*. In the Second Book, we meet with three or four particulars of this kind. — There *Telemachus* desires the suitors (as it is in *Homer*) to leave him, and be quiet; as in Mr. *Pope*, to (b) *rise in his aid*. — There the same Prince is said to *draw his hand gently out of that of Antinous*; instead of which the Translation, I think, tells us that he *frown'd*; caught away his hand (c) *sternly*; and *strode away in a passion*. 'Tis the same Case with *Mentor* in the Council: he rose to make a speech to them, with (as the *Greek* signifies) a *wise or friendly air*; but in the *English*,

(d) *Stern* as he rose, he cast his Eyes around, That *flash'd with rage*; and as he spoke, he *frown'd*.

These look like contrarieties between *Homer* and his Translator; there seem

(a) B. 8, 580. θ'. 524. — ἔης πρόθεν πόλιν —

(b) B. 2, 77. β'. 70.

Σχέδε φίλοι, καὶ μ' οἷον ἐάσατε πένθει λυγρῷ
Τείρεσθαι. —

(c) B. 2, 362. β'. 321.

ἐν χειρὸς χειρὰ σπᾶσεν Ἀντινόοιο.
Πεία, —

(d) B. 2, 259. β'. 228.

to be a few others, between passages in the Translation itself.

There is a part of *Mercury's* speech in the *Fifth Odyssey*, and another point in the description of *Lackaa*, an uninhabited Island, which (I remember) I mention'd to you formerly, as Examples of this Inconsistency. Such indeed they appear'd to me, even after a second and third Reading: but upon consulting the Original, I at last found them to be capable of a consistent Meaning. However it is to be wish'd, that the Translator had set them in a clearer light: for in one, the reader will be apt to imagine, that the Poet speaks of (a) *Inhabitants, in a desert Country*; and in the other, that *Mercury* is said to have been (b) *vastly delighted* with the sight of *Calypso's* Island, and *not to have been delighted at all* with the sight of it.

In another place (I take it to be in the very first Book of the *Odyssey*) *Telemachus* says, that his Father is (c) *Dead*, and that he is *wandering* from Country to Country, at the same article of time:

(a) Book 9. Compare Verse 143 with 147.

(b) Book 5. Compare Verse 98 with 124.

(c) B. 1, 299 and 309.

Thus

EVENING III. 141

Thus too we hear the Sea call'd *the* (a) *foaming Flood* in one Line; and in the very next, 'tis the *Level surface* of the deep.

As for mere *Mistakes*, (where a Verse carries something of *Blunder* in the sound of it) I have taken but little notice of them; and shall only mention two or three, just to shew, that the *greatest Writers* are capable of falling into such *Errors*, as will be discernible to the *meanest Readers*.

(b) *I answer'd, Goddess! human is thy breast—*

—— is a Line of this kind: and the Expressions in it will appear to every one that looks upon it, to be improperly put together, on the same account, as those in the following Couplet:

(c) Some other motive, *Goddess!* sways thy mind,
Some close design, or turn of *Woman-kind*.

There is a Verse just come into my head, in which the Translator may be

(a) B. 5, 65.

(b) B. 10, 451.

(c) B. 5, 224.

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thought to talk of (a) *seeing a Sound*; and in another we are told of a place so (b) *deep, that you cou'd not shoot to the bottom of it.*

I know not whether a severe Critick would not think that there is a jar between the Expressions, where *Ulysses* is said to be

— Doom'd to mourn,
(c) *Bitter Constraint, erroneous and forlorn.*

And where *Halitherses* speaks of

(d) *Deeds then undone.*

But these, and such like trifles, I shall leave to those, who are fond of finding faults; and whom I can own without envy to have a greater Niceness, and Curiosity in verbal Criticism, than ever I desire to have.

These, tho' less considerable blemishes in a *poetical* Character, are much more

(a) B. 6, 40.

See, from their thrones thy kindred Monarchs sigh.

(b) Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, cou'd reach the depth below.

B. 12, 102.

(c) B. 1, 102.

(d) B. 2, 201.

obvious

obvious to every Eye, than the greater defects of a Poem; and are generally observ'd upon with more scorn and contempt, than any other: they border on *Ridicule*; and that is a thing, which will ever be agreeable to *little Minds*. That Verse in the *British Princes*, which describes (a) the *Vest* of a *naked Pict*; and that in one of Mr. *Dryden's* Tragedies, which speaks of (b) *Silence invading the Ear*, has probably been repeated many times more, than the best Line even *Dryden* ever wrote. This is low enough o' conscience, tho' it has been a very fashionable way of Criticising of late Years: it shews how ill-natur'd the World is; but people will have their Laugh: and 'tis vastly easier to *Ridicule*, than to *Admire*.

It is this sort of Men, *Philypsus*, and a clan of others, equally malicious, and more gloomy than the former, who have brought the name of *Critick* into such contempt among us: While those have imagin'd, that Sneering and Malice are the best titles to Wit; and these were

(a) A painted Vest Prince *Voltager* had on, Which from a *Naked Pict* his Granfire won.

(b) What horrid silence does invade my Ear?

of opinion, That *to find fault, is to Criticise*. How different from this was the method of the Ancient Criticks of Greece and Rome? Indeed Criticism, as first instituted by *Aristotle*, was design'd for a Standard of judging well; to give an insight into the Excellencies of Authors, and to discern their Faults. There was a time, when it was a study highly rational; far from borrowing its force from Ridicule and False Wit, it shou'd proceed upon known Rules and establish'd Measures. I do not say but that the best Criticks may have approv'd of particular Lines, without being capable of assigning the Reasons why they pleas'd them so greatly. You often see a Face which is very taking, without any regularity of Features: such an one as pleases every body, tho' no body can give the Reason of his being pleas'd with it. Eloquence has its *Je ne sçai quoi's*, as well as Beauty. However most commonly we can specify the particular *features*, which are so agreeable; or know that our pleasure is founded on the Symmetry of the *whole*.

But it is not enough that Criticism is rational; it shou'd ever be Humane and Good-natur'd. Where the Design is great, the Disposition just, the Descriptions

tions lively, and the Language generally good and poetical, that work is in general to be commended; tho' the Poet, in particular Points, may have fallen into many faults; nay into some, which look very gross, when they are consider'd singly. The greatest Critick among the Roman Poets lays it down for a Rule, *That where there are more Beauties than Faults in a Poem, that Piece is to be pronounced good*: And one of the greatest Criticks among the Greeks, carries it yet farther: He shews at large, (a) *That there is often a negligence, that is becoming; — That a greatness of Soul will carry a Man above the observation of little Circumstances; — And That a Poet of a generous Spirit with faults, is greatly preferable to a low, wary Writer without them.*

Agreeable to this was the behaviour of these great Men, in laying down rules, or making observations: their intention was to distinguish the beauties of Language or Sentiments, from the defects and vices of either. You find them to have been in Love with the Charms of Eloquence, and the true Spirit of Poetry,

(a) *Longinus, περὶ ὑψηλῆς, λγ', &c.*

where-ever they meet with them. They take not that snarling Satisfaction in finding faults, which many of their pretended Successors are so full of in their writings. Indeed they very freely pointed out the mistakes and vices of the greatest Writers; but their chief design in this was, that such of their remarks might serve as *Buoys* to shew where former ventures had miscarried, and to prevent others from running upon the same Shallows. This was the Spirit of the Ancient Criticks. Their Fate was according to their Merit: they still remain among us, and are read with pleasure and applause: whilst *Zoilus*, the only *Modern Critick of the Ancients*, has left nothing behind him, except the odious memory of his Impotence, and his Malice.

Our modern *Zoilus's* (interpos'd *Philypsus*) are very easily known. They run down the performances of the best writers with heat and noise: every thing is a fault with them. They will go regularly thorough a Poem, with a constant frown upon them; and think themselves obliged to find mistakes or nonsense in every Line of it; they condemn by Tale, and censure by the Sheet. Nothing is more probable, than that from the *Poem*, they come to quarrel with the
Person

Person of the Author. Blemishes in his moral Character, and even natural Imperfections, have a share in their observations: and in a word, they labour hard to convince you, that they are bad Christians as well as bad Criticks. The best of it is, their attacks are as weak, as they are violent; they have but little of Courage, tho' they make so great a Noise with it: and are like a sort of Curs that bark most, and run the soonest. The Character that has been so often given of the *French* as *Warriors*, is true of these People, as *Writers*: They behave themselves fiercer than Men, in the onset; and in the shock, are feebler than Women.

I think you cannot be too severe upon them, resum'd *Antiphaus*: they are a Contradiction to true Criticism; as they always shew the greatest malice against every thing, that deserves the most to be commended. Mr. *Pope* has had the fate to be attack'd by these Animals: and indeed I do not see how he could avoid it. He has too many excellencies to let them sleep in quiet.

'Tis certain that the faults of a Writer (and never was any Writer without faults) ought to be observed; and the more excellent an Author is, the more necessary

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necessary is such a Work. But this is the Drudgery of Criticism: the Pleasure and the Profit are on the other side.

We ought to shew faults, but we ought never to shew malice. And beside the general good Nature which is owing to those Great Men, who have eminently oblig'd the World by their Labours; there are particular allowances to be made in this last work of the greatest Poet of our Age. Nothing in the World is more laborious, than Translation; and especially when the Piece is engag'd for, and must go on. 'Tis extremely difficult to keep up the Spirit of Poetry in another's Compositions, tho' you catch all the (a) *aptest Moments*; and never employ the Mind, but when there is an *Impetus* comes upon it toward that particular business: and this Difficulty is greatly increas'd, where a Man cannot well sit down to it, only at such times as his Muse is in a good Humour; but may be obliged, in a manner, to write by the Hour, and upon fixt returns. I know not how far this was the Case with Mr. Pope, in this performance: but where-ever it was, the Poet will be little

(a) *Mollia tempora fandi.*

EVENING III. 149

more than a common Man: He is, at such times, much the same as a Prophet without his *Afflatus*.

Besides this, I must repeat, what I have said so often: The constant returns of Rhyme unavoidably unnerve a Poem: The Age is in Love with this Weakness; and Mr. *Pope*, in indulging their humour, has perhaps taken much from the strength of his Genius: had he been less obliging to the taste of his Readers, his performance might have been more finewy, and more complete. This ought certainly to be taken into the account; and wherever the Translation falls short of the force and nervousness of *Homer*, we ought constantly to ask ourselves this question; Whether *Homer* himself cou'd have carried it farther, had he wrote (as Mr. *Pope* does) in *English*, and in *Rhyme*?

'Tis true, all this may be said of his Translation of the *Iliad*; but if that Piece exceed this of the *Odyssey*, it is very natural upon many Accounts that it shou'd do so. *Homer* exceeds himself in that Poem. — Great Actions strike the Soul with rapidity; while all the things that relate to lower life, are less vigorous and affecting: — The description of Warriors and moral Precepts have a
very

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very different effect on the writers themselves; those assist the Poetical flame, while these sling the Mind into a more sedentary Posture. — 'Tis natural almost for People to sleep at Sermons: But a Battle rouses and animates the Spectators, as well as those who are engaged in it. Thus there must be less spirit in the Writer, as well as less attentiveness in the Reader of the *Odyssey*: and a Translation of it, even from one and the same Hand, could not fairly be expected to equal a Translation of the *Iliad*. The Reader and the Poet have both of them the disadvantage of a cooler and more unactive Subject: A *Poet* (as Age always is) vastly talkative, a *Fable* laid infinitely lower, and a *Diction*, almost perpetual in moral Sentences and Reflections, give a pattern very different from *Homer* in all his vigour, describing the fatal Effects of the Passion of *Achilles*, and sounding out the Wars of the *Greeks* with an air the most martial and animated that can be imagined.

Here *Antiphaus* rose up from his seat; and as *Philypsus* perceiv'd that he had finish'd; "I was unwilling to interrupt you, (says he) otherwise I shou'd have observ'd on a verse or two, which you repeated as rough, and of a bad turn.

What

EVENING III. 151

What were those Lines of *the Rocks*,
which you mention'd just now? — Of the
Rocks? (says *Antiphaus*) let me see —
Oh, I remember them;

No Bird of air, no Dove of swiftest wing,
Shuns the dire rocks: in vain she cuts the skies,
The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies.

The same, says *Philypsus*: these and
that other verse,

Rich Tapestry, stiff with in-woven gold,

sound indeed rough; but to me their
roughness is their beauty: the turn of
them seems design'd; and their manner,
to be expressive of their sense. If that
be the Case, I beg pardon, says *Antiphaus*:
Were I the greatest enemy in the World
to mere harmony, and the stated returns
and gingle of syllables; I shou'd be one
of the first among the admirers of Sound,
when ever it is made serviceable to Na-
ture and true Sense. That is the Art, (says
Philypsus) and the Mastery, for which I
particularly admire Mr. *Pope*: It is he
who took up that great Rule of *the Sound's*
being a comment on the Sense, and enforc'd
it beyond any of the Criticks, who went
before him. To this Writer we chiefly
owe the revival of the nobler art of Num-
bers;

bers; and the method of signifying motions, and actions, and all that vast variety of our passions, by *Sounds*. In his incomparable *Essay on Criticism*, this Writer has given us the best Advices, and interwoven the most beautiful Examples into them, in a manner that will always be admir'd. The first *Stanza*, in his *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, is the fullest Piece of this kind perhaps extant in any Language: 'tis itself a perfect Concert. In the Translations of *Homer* we find him very frequent, and very just, in the same manner of Expressing things: I call it so; and cou'd almost be persuaded to think it a better way of Expressing, than in the common way of *Words*. These have a Sense affixt to them by Custom: while the other speaks by the Ideas of things. That is a flowing, variable help; this is the Voice of Nature, and a sort of *Universal Poetical Language*.

Mr. *Pope* affords us infinite Examples of this Beauty in his Translation of the *Odyssey*; it would be endless to repeat them all, or to admire them as they deserve. But amidst all this variety, there is a single Point, which I have observ'd more than any of the rest: Whenever the Poet is speaking of the watry Element, or any thing belonging to it, his
manage-

EVENING III. 153

management of Sounds is particularly frequent and beautiful.

Tho' it might not be much observ'd at the first view, I know no place where a greater variety of things are express'd this way, than in the *Twelfth Odyssey*: 'Tis where *Ulysses* is giving an account of his setting sail from the Island of *Circe*:

(a)——We rush'd into the Main;
Then bending to the stroke, their oars they drew
To their broad breasts, and swift the Galley flew.
Up sprung a brisker breeze: with fresh'ning gales
The friendly Goddess stretch'd the swelling sails;
We drop our oars: with ease the pilot guides;
The vessel light along the level glides.
Then rising sad and slow, with pensive look,
Thus to the melancholy train I spoke.

The objects shift perpetually in these Lines; and yet there is not a single period or pause in them, the sound and turn of which does not agree perfectly with the sentiment: I do not intend to enlarge much upon them; but had it been wrote in the Days of *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, 'tis possible he might have given us a whole Dissertation, on a pas-

(a) B. 12, 189.

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sage which so variously expresses that Art, of which he was particularly fond. That is the Critick, I think, says *Antiphaus*, who first (a) observ'd this Beauty in the noted Description of *Sisyphus* his Stone. Yes, answer'd *Philypsus*; and every one knows how perfectly well the excellence of that Passage is preserv'd (b) in the Translation.

Words give us the bare Ideas of things; but words, thus managed, impress those Ideas very strongly and sensibly upon the mind. Do you not perceive the Storm rising, (c) *When the wild Winds whistle o'er the main?* and are you not in the midst of it when (d) *East, West together roar, And South and North roll mountains to the Shore?* Then are we hurried o'er the Deep, and see all the Rocks and dangers of it:

(e) *Dire Scylla there a scene of Horror forms, And here Charybdis fills the sea with storms; When the tide rushes from her rumbling caves, The rough rock roars, tumultuous boil the waves; They tols, they foam.—*

(a) Περὶ συνθέσεως ἀπομ. p. 29. Ed. R. Steph.

(b) B. 11, 735. λ'. 593.

(c) B. 12, 379.

(d) B. 5. 380.

(e) B. 12, 280.

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The next moment, if the Poet pleases;
(like the *Demon* he speaks of) he can
make all as gentle and serene, as it was
before rough and boisterous.

(a) Sunk are at once the winds: the air above,
And waves below, at once forget to move:
Some *Demon* calm'd the air, and smooch'd the deep,
Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to
[sleep.

Did you ever see a more perfect calm?
Yet, smooth and hush'd as these Lines
are, you may easily perceive a difference
between the description of a still Sea,
and the easy, beautiful current of a Ri-
ver.

(b) Smooth flows the gentle stream with wanton
And in soft mazes rolls a silver tide. [pride,

How happy is the hand of the Poet,
and what a Command has he of Na-
ture, to make the numbers of his verse
speak his Sentiments! Thus to paint
even sounds; and to draw by Mea-
sures, what does not come under the
power of the Pencil! In this Writer,

(a) B. 12, 202.

(b) B. 11, 186.

Sir

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Sir *John Denham's* Wish is effected: His Lines always flow as his Subject;

Tho' deep, yet clear; tho' gentle, yet not dull;
Strong, without rage; without o'erflowing, full.

I thank you (says *Antiphaus* bowing)
I thank you, my dear *Philypsus*, for this unexpected view of one of the greatest Beauties in Poetry. I cou'd willingly stay to hear you farther on this Head, and am perfectly angry with the Night for wearing away so fast. I hope we shall soon find an opportunity of resuming the Subject (answer'd *Philypsus*) I need not tell you how agreeable it is to me, even to be convinc'd of my Errors by *Antiphaus*; and I'm satisfy'd that you take a delight in any occasion of admiring Mr. *Pope*. I beg you wou'd tell me, *Antiphaus*; do you not approve of him in some points, more than you have formerly? I do not know how it is, (says *Antiphaus*) but I seem to be both more pleas'd, and more displeas'd with him, than I was before this inquiry: his Excellencies, from the light in which you have set them, strike me more agreeably than ever; but then this looking so closely into his Defects, has made those too the more gross and visible. How-

ever

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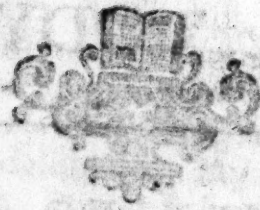
ever (concluded *Philypsus*) you will still acknowledge with me, *That his faults are the faults of a Man, but his beauties are the beauties of an Angel.* — You don't seem to like the word: it may sound perhaps too high; but I mean only of a *Great and Uncommon Genius.*



A N

EVENING

once (as usual) I shall be
acknowledging with you. For the last
the hands of a plan, but his business was
settling, as I thought. You don't seem to
like me, now. I may have perhaps
too high; but I mean only of a Great
and Uncommon Genius.



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AN
ESSAY
ON
Mr. *Pope's* ODYSSEY.

EVENING IV.

AFTER having engag'd themselves so far, we may imagine, that *Antiphaus* and *Philypsus* waited with a good deal of Impatience for the remaining Part of the *Odyssey*. As it happen'd, they were both in Town before it appear'd in Publick; and *Philypsus*, who was the warmer of the two, us'd to inquire almost every day at *Lintot's*, how the Press went on? He grew still the
H more

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more eager, as the time drew nearer: and the first moment he cou'd procure it in *Sheets*, he sat down to them with all the Pleasure, and all the Severity, that *Antiphæus* had preach'd up to him in their former Inquiries.

In the time that was taken up by this agreeable Search, he call'd often upon that Friend, with whom he shar'd his Studies, as well as his Affections. This was rather a Dividing, than Leaving his Pursuits: for he scarce ever saw *Antiphæus*, without mentioning something of the *Odyssey*, and hearing his Sentiments in return. When he had gone intirely thorough the Poem, he went immediately to desire a Meeting in some place where they might talk more at large upon that Head. By good luck *Antiphæus* was perfectly disengag'd: "'Tis a fine Evening, says he; and if you please, we will take a turn together in the Gardens of *Horatio*: since we cannot enjoy his Company, at least let us make use of that Liberty he has left with us. There we shall be retir'd from the Noise and Bustle of the Town, and safe from every sort of Interruption." *Philypsus* was extremely pleas'd to find him so ready: they stept together into his Coach, which drove immediately to *Horatio's*, and set them down at the Gates

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Gates which lead into the Great-Walk of the Garden.

After a turn or two there, they sat down by the side of a Fountain, full in sight of the *Thames*, which passes at the bottom of the Walk. The Walk itself makes a fine Vista in its Descent to the River: at a distance, you see the Fields and Hills; at first in an easy Ascent varied into Pasture and Arable, and then rising unequally, and cover'd here and there with Woods, till they are insensibly lost in a bluish Cast of the Clouds. The agreeableness of the Place made *Philypsus* forget himself for a few Moments: he was taken up wholly in wandering with his Eye, sometimes over those beautiful Gardens, and sometimes over the irregular Prospect that lay before him. At last recollecting himself, and turning to *Antiphauts*, "There is a difference (says he) " in the agreeable Sense I feel at present " from the delightful Views on all sides " of us, which may partly confirm what " we were talking of just before we sat " down." Does not this Work of Art, with all its Symmetry and Justness of Proportions, strike the Mind in a feebler manner, than that Land scape of Nature in its infinite Irregularity? These measured Rises and Falls, in Slopes an-

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swering each other, Those Groves terminating every way in an exactness of figure, These Walks intercrossing without confusion, and uniting so happily, cannot fail of pleasing the Eye very much: Yet that Wildness and Variety abroad, the River, Lawn, Fields, and Woods, so beautifully interspers'd, compose a Scene much finer and more engaging. For my part, I shou'd be apt to prefer that single Grot yonder, and the hanging Precipice over it, to a whole Scenery of natural Objects laid out in any regular manner whatever. There is something of this in the Pleasure which is given us by the greatest Writers. A noble, natural Genius, however irregular and unconfin'd, delights us in a much higher degree, than the most uniform and correct: And the Writer who enjoys this freedom of Soul, amidst all his Starts and Errors, is greatly to be preferr'd to the Justness of one, who is too severe to commit a Fault, and too cool and phlegmatick to be a Poet.

Such a temper (reply'd *Antiphaus*) can never produce any thing truly Great. The noblest Poet in the World has not the fewest Faults: and the same Spirit which qualified *Homer* to be so, is what at the same time might hurry him away from a nicer Observation of some little
Parti-

EVENING IV. 163

Particulars. The very Negligences of *Homer* shew the Greatness of his Spirit: and where there may be any like Negligences in the Version of *Homer*, methinks, it wou'd be but Justice to attribute them to the same Cause: at least where the Spirit of that Poet is so discernible, as it is in this late Translation.

I cannot but smile sometimes, when I hear a severer Reader very gravely condemning a Poem for a few Faults, which may be evident in it here and there. Nothing can be plainer than that our Judgments ought to be form'd upon the Whole, and not upon Particulars: the Superiority of Beauties or Defects is the only thing that can determine the Character of the Piece. 'Tis possible that Mr. *Hobbes* may have express'd a word or two correctly, where the New Translation has deviated into a Metaphorical or licentious Expression: but what a strange method of Comparison wou'd it be, to settle our opinion of the Writers from hence? By such a way of proceeding, we might prefer one, who loses the Life and Vigor of Poetry throughout, to others who preserve it so strongly in the general Turn of their Compositions.

As we go on, *Philypsus*, with our usual freedom of speaking our Sentiments on each particular Passage; I dare say, that even all those, which may seem faulty to us, will make but a small figure, when compar'd to the several Excellencies of this Piece. As for my part, after a Research of some care thro' the whole Translation, I find no reason at all to alter my Opinion, "That the Beauties
 " of it are far more numerous, and far
 " more considerable, than its Blemishes:
 " even taking all those things for *real*
 " Blemishes, which we may only *imagine*
 " to be such."

If the fashionable Choice of *Verse* be justly blameable, it may as justly be said, that no one moves with more freedom in his Fetters. In particular Lines, there may be some farther disagreeable *Like-nesses* of Sound; but the *Variety* of Numbers in general is great and handsome: What Smoothness and Harmony do we find thro' the course of the Poem; and how seldom are they interrupted either by the *Little-ness*, or the *Vastness* of the Words; by the *Openness* of the Vowels, the *Clasping* of Consonants, or any other Roughnesses whatever. Not to mention against these, that *Significance* of Sound, which is more frequently and more happily

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pily practis'd by Mr. *Pope*, than by any other of the Modern Poets.

As to the *Diction*; not only the Poem, but our Language itself is enrich'd by it. Where it is once Mean, it is in many instances Great, Noble, and Solemn. Where a Simplicity beyond our Taste is to be preserv'd, we may expect some Flatnesses: And, it may be, to these perhaps we owe that Justness and Purity, which in so many places makes us imagine, that we are conversing with Persons of those First Ages of the World, in all their Plainness and Honesty of Behaviour. At other times the Narration is rais'd, and the Images strengthen'd, by a figurative way of speaking, tho', no doubt, in some cases, to excess: but these Excesses may well be pass'd over, when we consider, that they proceed from Liberties, which are highly useful in rendering the Style the more various and poetical; so far, as frequently to improve upon *Homer* himself.

Above all, is that *flame* and *spirit* diffus'd thro' the whole Poem; and oftentimes so well kept up, as to make us forget, that we are reading a Translation. When we are engag'd in the Piece, do not the *great* and *generous* Sentiments we meet with perpetually, make a few Thoughts, which have something

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cold or little in them, appear inconsiderable upon the first Comparison? What *Openings* have we, and how little *Obscurity*! What a number of natural Thoughts, Images, and Descriptions might be produc'd, to over-balance such Lines in it, as may seem to be Affected, or too Artificial!

Thus, which ever way we turn ourselves, whether we consider the *Poetical Spirit*, the *Language*, or the *Versification*; in each of them the Beauties far exceed the Defects. It is with this Notion we ought to proceed in our Inquiries: we must carry this Thought all along with us. Let us remember, *Philypsus*, "That
 " all human Excellence stands merely on
 " Comparison: That no one is without
 " Faults, and that very few arrive in
 " any tolerable degree towards Perfection:
 " That Mr. *Pope* does not only
 " appear among the Few, but that his
 " Superiority is every way visible: If we
 " compare his Compositions in general
 " with those of our other Poets, the
 " Disproportion is as great, as when we
 " compare the Blemishes of his own
 " Poetry, with the Beauties which everywhere
 " abound in it."

Some of these we are now to consider; and we may enter on this View with the greater Pleasure, as we have the advantage

tage of Mr. *Pope's* own Observations in several Points, both as to those things, in which he met with the greatest difficulty; and the Methods he has taken of raising his Language, and improving the Verification.

One of the greatest Sources of raising, as well as enlarging the Poetical Language, is by inventing New Words, or importing old Ones from a foreign Soil. Words, when they are us'd vulgarly, grow mean: Like other Fashions, when their use is once got among the Populace, they soon begin to be rejected by the politer Part of the World. This it is (as (a) the *Gentlemen* of *Port-Royal* very justly observe) which necessitates the introducing of New Words into every Language; it occasions a continual Decay, and demands continual Supplies. Thus, whoever has a Felicity this way, is a Benefactor to the Publick: he adds so much to the Bank; and gives his Assistance in supporting the present Credit of Language among us.

It would be equally trifling and laborious, to give all the particular Instances of this Version's enriching our Language. It is every-where visible;

(a) *Art de bien Parler*, Part 1. Chap. 4. Sect. 5.

there is no reading a Book in the *Odyssey*, without observing it frequently. You will almost constantly find Mr. Pope's new Words to be apt, easy, and poetical. Sometimes he introduces the Expressions, and even the *Peculiarities* of other Languages into our own. These, when unforc'd, please us very particularly, by the Variety and Novelty they bring along with them. We admire the Stranger in our Habit; and are extremely taken to see him look as free and easy as if he were a Native, and had been always truly *English*.

The Poet has the same Art and Delicacy in *Connecting* two Words into one, a thing much more difficult than *Inventing*: The Union is proper and insensible; there is no Knot, where they are ingrafted: in short, they (*a*) may be said rather to grow into one another, than to be brought together by Art. I do not say, that this hits so naturally in all the Instances; there may be (*b*) some Words less tractable, or less harmonious than others: But in general

(*a*) Thus: *Mellifluous*, *attemper'd*; *ever-shady*, *ill-persuading*, *serpent-mazes*; and several others in this Translation.

(*b*) Thus perhaps: *Sea-girt*, *end-long*, *love-distied*, *woman-state*, &c. in the same.

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we may affirm, that as his Translation is wrought off from a Language, which, in this respect, greatly exceeds all that ever were; so the Imitations of it, this way, are unusually Beautiful and Harmonious.

To deviate from the strict Rules which Grammarians wou'd impose on Words, either single, or as they stand in their relations to one another, gives an agreeable uncommon Air to Language; but in the very Notion of it carries something of difficulty and niceness along with it. Mr. *Pope* seems to have thought it the safest way in such Cases to follow or resemble those Deviations, which have been already authoriz'd by some Masterly hand: and where he strikes more boldly into any new Freedom, he is generally careful of giving things such an Openness, that they may neither perplex the Sense, nor embarrass the Period.

A thing more useful and agreeable than either of these, is to turn the stream of Words out of their common Channel.

—There is a good deal of Stiffness, which yet attends our Language, from the stated order of Words in such a repeated Succession; and tho' we are much freer than our Neighbours the *French* in this particular, I should be glad to see our Poets, at least, go yet farther to-

wards the Liberties of the old *Greeks* and *Romans*. Mr. *Pope* has some strokes towards this: he is sometimes bold in varying the expected range of Words, to give his Sentences a new and agreeable air; he transposes their order, often by his own Judgment, and often in imitation of some of our best Poets, who have succeeded in it before.

I wou'd not have a certain Grammarian, or two, over-hear me commending these Liberties so freely: it wou'd certainly cost one a Dispute. You know the Men: they are as strict in the Punctilio's of Words, as some formal People are in the little Points of Behaviour. I warrant you, your Neighbour, the Doctor, wou'd stand as strictly upon the *Nominative Case's* going before the Verb, as *Wicquefort* wou'd for the Precedence of an Ambassador: 'Tis certain he can settle all the Rules of Place from undeniable Authorities; disposes of the Upper-hand with perfect Oeconomy; and, upon the whole, would make an Excellent Master of the Ceremonies among Words and Syllables.

However, with this Gentleman's leave, there are several just Liberties which may be allow'd for varying the Poetical (a) Style;

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(a) Style; and many Aids, proper to enliven and elevate it in the more noble Parts of a Poem.

Among the latter, Mr. *Pope* has made very good use of Antiquated Words; and no less of Expressions borrow'd from our Translation of the Sacred Writings. The Language of Scripture, as it is receiv'd from the first with a certain religious Awe, will still retain something venerable and august: it may therefore be of signal Service in giving to the Heroick Muse that Majesty, which so well becomes the Sublime Air she ought to assume. 'Tis much the same in the revival of old Words: Antiquity always carries a sort of Solemnity with it, in its very Roughnesses and Decays: The *Rustick* strikes the Mind as strongly as any thing in Architecture; and Ruins themselves have often something awful and majestick in them.

I wou'd not willingly interrupt you (says *Philypsus*); but the humour of heaping superannuated Words in some late Poems, is too provoking to be pass'd by. How have our *Miltonick* Writers, in par-

(a) Plurimæ sint locutiones apud Poetas usitatissimæ, & in primis elegantes, quæ scriptis Profanis usurpatæ etiam Grammaticæ leges violant. See *Trapp's* *Prel. Poet.* p. 49. &c. to p. 53.

ticular,

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ticular, prostituted them on all occasions ! in what an undistinguishing manner do they labour to draw into their Works any word, which their great Master has adopted into his *Paradise Lost* ! — *Erst*, *Natblefs*, *Bekefts*, *Welkin*, and a Thousand other Expressions of equal beauty and agreeableness of Sound, are repeated ten times in every Sheet of theirs : in short, these Gentlemen have made me quite sick of People's going two Hundred Years backward for their Language ; and furnishing out half their Poems from the Vocabularies annex'd to *Spencer* and *Chaucer*.

As for some of those Writers (reply'd *Antiphæus* calmly) you have reason to be angry with them ; but if we may reject any thing merely for the *abuse* of it, there is nothing of the greatest *use*, that we may not fairly reject. *Virgil* made particular use of this method in his Poems, and was (a) admir'd by his Countrymen on that account : What is your Opinion of our *Milton* ? Are you displeas'd with the antiquated Words in his Writings ? No, *Philypsus*, I know your Taste too

(a) Cum sint verba proprias sicta, translata ; Propriis dignitatem dat Antiquitas : eo ornamento Virgilius mihi est usus. *Quintil. Inst. Lib. 8. Cap. 3. Again, Lib. 9. Cap. 3.*

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well to imagine any thing of that nature. And even of those, that have follow'd his Example, there is one or two who make good use of them. This we see in *Philips's* pieces; not to mention the new (a) Poem we were reading the other Day: the Author of which, beside several other Beauties, is by no means unhappy in his Management of this sort of Words. I agree with you, the Abuse of them is frequent, and much to be condemn'd: If perpetual, they run into a mere Barbarism; and indeed where-ever they are thrust in, without any other reason except their being Ancient, they give a Roughness and Disorder, instead of the proper Solemnity: But when they are plac'd here and there with Judgment, they support the greatness of our Ideas, and reflect a venerableness on the subject. Were the Old Oaks, that are left standing in the Gardens of *Blenheim*, more numerous, that Design might have too much of the Forest in it: but as they are, they serve to communicate the nobler air of Antiquity to the things about them; and appear in a Majesty of Years, equal to the Grandeur of the Place.

I wou'd desire you to commend the insertion of Solemn Words, only as they

(a) WINTER. By Mr. Thomson.

are

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are proper to the Places in which they are us'd. We see by Mr. *Pope's* Observations on this Head, that he understands the Benefit of them perfectly well; as his Works shew that he practises up to his own Rules; and scarce ever inserts either the Words of former Centuries, or the Language of Scripture, but where the Subject demands a solemn and venerable Turn.

As these are the chief Methods of *ennobling* the Poetick Style; so the chief to *enliven* it, is the free and various use of *Epithets*. No one thing is of greater service to the Poets for distinguishing their Language from Prose. This has occasion'd that (a) large and unrestrain'd use of them, so much beyond what we find in Oratory: And tho' *Homer* is more bold and frequent in this, than any of the Poets who have wrote since, I know not any of the *Ancient* Criticks who have ever blam'd him on that account. 'Tis partly from his uncommon liberties this way, that Mr. *Pope* looks upon his *Epithets*, as one of the (b) *Distin-*

(a) *Eo (Epitheta) poetæ & frequentius & liberius utuntur: Namque illis satis est convenire verbo, cui apponitur: & ita Dentes albi, & Humida Vina in his non reprehenduntur. Quintil. Instit. Lib. 8. Cap. 6.*

(b) *Pref. to ll. p. 21.*

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guishing Marks of that Poet. In *Homer* they have, on several accounts, a peculiar air: and this Translation not only preserves their proper beauties, but shews many Methods of improving upon them. Sometimes the Old are set in a stronger light, and sometimes New ones added with a peculiar grace: Sometimes several are applied to the same thing, without (a) that strictness of connexion, which wou'd (b) flatten the energy of them; and where the poverty of our Language will not convey their full Sense in the Conciseness of the Original, they are enlarged upon in the Translation, and laid more open to our view.

Epithets, *Philypsus*, like Pictures in Miniature, are often intire descriptions in one Word. This may be either from their own significance, or by their immediate connexion with some known object. We see the thing, when the Poet only mentions the *Nodding Crest* of an Hero; and form a larger Idea of *Job* from the single Epithet of *Cloud-compelling*, than we might find in a Description more diffuse. It was chiefly from (c) two

(a) Huge, horrid, vast! *Od.* 5. 227. — 175.

(b) Τὸ τοῦτο, κύριον, φαινεύοντα, τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τὸ συνδέσμι μεγάλαιόν τερον ἀνέκν. *Dem. Phal.* ξδ'.

(c) See Mr. Pope's Note on *Il.* 1. 683.

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Poetical Epithets, that *Phidias* design'd the countenance of his *Olympian Jupiter*; as, in Reverse, we often see the Person in his Epithet, from our being acquainted with some Statue, or Picture, to which it refers: Thus when *Apollo* is call'd the *Archer-God*, it recalls to our memory the representations we have so often seen of that Deity: the complete Figure is rais'd up in the Mind, by touching upon that single circumstance.

'Tis by the same means, that one single Epithet gives us the Idea of any Object, which has been common and familiar to us. Meadows, Fields, Woods, Rivers, and the Sea itself, are often imagin'd by one well-chosen Word. Thus in that (a) beautiful Description of *Calypho's Bower*, you see the Groves of *living green*; the Alders *ever quivering*; the *nodding Cypress*, and its high Branches, *waving with the Storm*: 'Tis by Epithets that the ancient Poets paint their *Elysian Groves*; and the Modern, their *Windsor Forests*.

Where our Language will not admit of this conciseness, we find the Image preserv'd by a Description more full and diffusive: Thus,

(a) See *Od.* 5, 85.

—The Morning Sun increasing bright [light.
 (a) O'er Heav'n's pure Azure spreads the growing

I should think that the Opening of the Sense in a larger Compass may often be approv'd, even where we are not driven to it by the poverty of our Language. *Homer* himself, who has the advantage of single Words so much stronger and more significant, often chuses to draw out his Sentiments into several Lines, and sometimes (b) the very same Sentiment, which upon other Occasions he has express'd in one word only. May not the same Liberty be allow'd to his Translators? Is it not a fine Enlargement, for Instance, where *Homer* is speaking of *Penelope's Veil* with the Epithet of *Pellucid* only, to say that "the Transpa-
 "rent Veil

" (c) Her beauty seems, and only seems to shade."

Tho' the imaging and descriptive sort of Epithets may be the more Beautiful; those which add Strength and Emphasis

(a) *Od.* 9, 67,—56.

(b) *Néερ* which is beautifully express'd by *Horace* in three words (*nimum lubricus aspiei*) is enlarged by *Homer* himself, on a fit occasion, into three lines: Compare *Il.* λ'. 16. with *v.* 340.

(c) *Od.* 18, 250,—209. *Λ'παεγ*.

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are by no means to be contemn'd. This way they are of great Service in all *Satire*; and particularly in that Abusiveness, which *Homer* is not over-nice in bestowing upon his Gods: they appear well in the Ridicule of the Suitors; and are strong and vehement in any *Arrogant Character*, particularly in all Contemnners of the Gods. I shall give you only one instance of the latter; from *Polyphe'me's* Answer to *Ulysses*:

Fools that you are! (the monster made reply,
His inward fury blazing at his eye)
Or strangers distant far from our abodes,
To bid me rev'rence or regard the Gods.
Know, that we Cyclops are a race above
(a) Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove.

You must have observ'd (*Philypsus*) several other Methods of using Epithets poetically. I need not mention the peculiar fitness and strength, which they may acquire, from the (b) *occasions* on which they are us'd, or the *Light* they are set in: That (c) *Substantives* are sometimes us'd as *Epithets*; and sometimes (d) *Epithets* as *Substantives*: Sometimes the (e) *Metaphor* is convey'd this way with a good Grace;

(a) *Od.* 9, 330, — 276.

(b) *Od.* 23, 217, compared with verse 227.

(c) *Od.* 1, 389, — 299.

(d) *Od.* 19, 110, — 91.

(e) *Od.* 10, 291.

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and at others, two *Thwarting Ideas* are mixt together in a very agreeable manner. Mr. *Addison* is the first I know of, that observ'd upon these, and gave them their Name; and of this kind is the (a) *Vegetable Venom* in the fourth *Odyssy*, which answers (b) his Instance of *Aurum Frondens* from *Virgil*.

I know not whether I perfectly apprehend you, or not (interpos'd *Philppus*): Do you not mean that particular sort of Metaphor, when some strange *quality* in a thing, is turn'd into an *Epithet*, and directly applied to it? — Either that, or else some strange Circumstance applied in the same manner: in both 'tis the Novelty, and the Surprize that please us.— I take you, says *Philypsus*; and believe I now see a farther Reason, why a very natural Passage (in another Poem by Mr. *Pope*) has always been so agreeable to me. 'Tis where he speaks of the odd Appearance of things from their inversion in a River: I think I can repeat it:

Oft in the Stream—The musing Shepherd spies
The headlong Mountains, and the downward Skies,
The wat'ry Landskip of the pendant Woods,
And absent Trees, that tremble in the Floods;

(a) *Od.* 4. 320.—230.

(b) *Addison's Misc.* Vol. 1. p. 245. [2mo]

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In the clear azure Glean the Flocks are seen,
(a) And floating Forests paint the Waves with green.

These are of the kind I mean, says *Antiphaus*; they are bold, but they are natural: Indeed, with due caution, greater Contrarieties than these may be join'd, under some particular Circumstance, to justify so unexpected an Union. Thus all Epithets, which contradict the general Sense of the Thing, but agree with the particular Occasion: Thus is Grief call'd *pleasing*; there are *Kindnesses* which are *terrible* (b): And in many cases *Death* and even *Disgrace* may be *desirable*. Instances of this kind are very frequent, especially among our modern Poets. There are (c) many in this Translation: in particular, 'tis this which gives a new Air to that gay (d) Speech of *Mercury* in the Eighth Book.

Tho' the *Latins* us'd this agreeable Clash of Ideas, the *Greek Poets* (as Mr. *Addison* (e) observes on the former Head) wanted *Art* for it: They, at least the

(a) *Windsor-Forest*, p. 59. folio.

(b) As when the *Cyclops*, in the height of his good-nature, promises *Ulysses*, that he shall be the last he will devour. *Od.* 9.

(c) *Od.* 1, 449.—353, 15, 435.—399. otherwise 12, 52, 18, 284, &c.

(d) Verse 380—342.

(e) *Misc.* Vol. 1. p. 254. 1220.

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more Ancient of them, never join things that seem to disagree, in so close an Union. Unless where Nature herself has led the way in an (a) actual mixture of Contrarieties: in any point, except that single one, these must be intirely Improvements on the Original.

The Misfortune is, that in all Human Excellencies there will be an Alloy: Faults spring out of our Improvements themselves; and the very methods of Beautifying lead often into Blemishes. The way to any Perfection is full of Difficulties and Windings on each side; and every Step out of the right Path (tho' they cross each other every Moment) is a wandering from our Design. In a word, *Philypsus*, 'tis much the same with Errors and Improvements, as it is with Pleasure and Pain in the Philosopher's Fable: they are blended together in such a manner, that it is impossible to come at the one, without touching upon the other.

All the Methods which are us'd in Mr. *Pope's* Translation, and which are so often of great Efficacy towards beautifying and improving the Diction, may

(a) Thus in the *Twilight*, when we have really a sort of *visible Darkness*, *Homer* uses an Epithet of the same contrariety: *Ἀμφιλυγής*, i. e. *Darkness ting'd every way with Light*. *Il.* 6. 433.

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sometimes fall under a different Character.

Among the Words which are introduc'd from other Languages into our own, there may be (a) some, which still retain too much of the air of Foreigners: As antiquated Words may (b) look too Grotesque, or have a rough, disagreeable sound. The very Solemnity of Scriptural Expressions may sometimes require that they should not be (c) alienated: at least it may make them look (d) too high for the Passages in which they are inserted.

Next to the importing of Words New to the Poetical Style, is the varying the use of the Old. To deviate from the strictness of Grammar, is what gave a rise to Rhetorick; and surely there are few who wou'd not prefer all the beautiful Forms and Figures of the latter (at least for Poetry and Oratory) to that bare correctness, which alone is the Province of the former: Yet there may be Innovations on this too harsh or daring; and Figures, that may look more like

(a) Dexter, circumfusile, variegated. *Od.* 15, 145.

(b) Seneschal, viands, bev'rage, ireful. 3, 179.

(c) *Jupiter* is stil'd *God* (simply, *Od.* 3, 190, — 158
Θεός) *Neptune*, a God above the Gods. *Od.* 13, 176.

(d) To thee a Son is giv'n — *Od.* 18, 207. And —
Food in the desert land, behold, is giv'n. — *Od.* 10,
204, — 175.

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Patchwork, than true Ornaments in the Dress of Poetry.

The greater danger is, when the Poet assumes (a) any common Word in a new unusual Sense. The worst Fault of any Language is Ambiguity; that great cause of Darkness in Verse, and the continuer of every Dispute that has been kept up for any time in Prose. The various Appearances of words, *Philypsus*, should not be multiply'd unnecessarily: the Reader is apt to be distracted between so many Lights; and in such a Variety, is more likely to follow the false, than the true.

I have observ'd this particularly in Words deriv'd from other Languages: These, you know, often prevail among us very differently from their native signification. The *Latin sense* perhaps is one thing, and the *English use* another: When this has obtain'd universally, we ought not to run back to the *Latin* (b) sense of the word, in our use of it. If you should, the Learned themselves may not readily fall into your meaning, and the Unlearned will inevitably mistake it.

It may be inquir'd too, how far this Translation may make a wrong use of

(a) *Flown* (with Insolence) *Od.* 1. 292. *Filial* (for a Daughter) 6, 67.

(b) *Partial*, *Od.* 8, 185. *Succinct*, 17, 200. *Objected*, 7, 54. *Implicit*, 9, 514.

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Terms borrow'd from any of the Arts and Sciences: As where we read of *Architraves*, *Colonnades*, and the like. I would not produce these as undoubted faults in the Poetical Stile: tho' the banishing *all Technical Words* be laid down by some Criticks as a Rule never to be transgressed; I should imagine they might be admitted in some Cases; even where there is not that absolute necessity, either of using them, or losing the Sense of the Original.

Will not the very thing, on which the Rule is founded, allow the departing from it sometimes? "*That the Poet writes to all Mankind in general;*" And "*That he should avoid all appearance of Labour, as well as Affectation,*" is very true; and very good reasons they are for his not using Technical Words, while they carry difficulty, and an air of Affectation, about them: But if such Words ever happen to be perfectly familiarized by the Writings of former Poets, or become of common Use in the World, I should think they have the same Right to be admitted into Poetry (and if not mean, the same Propriety) as any other Words, the most obvious and intelligible. Any one may distinguish their greater or less fitness, on this Account, in the Description of *Alcinous's* Palace: in which there are several Instances, both of Terms familiariz'd, and
of

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of such as are less allowable, under one and the same view:

The *Front* appear'd with radiant splendors gay,
Bright as the Lamp of Night, or Orb of Day.
The Walls were massy brass; the *Cornice* high
Blue Metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:
Rich Plates of Gold the *folding-doors* incase;
The Pillars Silver, on a brazen *base*;
Silver the *Lintels* deep-projecting o'er,
(a) And Gold the *Ringlets* that command the Door.

Some of these Terms are certainly allowable; and you will think perhaps I carry the matter too far in another Point, which may seem as allowable to the full. You must know, I am apt to imagine, that not only the more difficult Terms of Art, but even such Words as are (b) *usurp'd* more particularly in any single

(a) *Od.* 7, 117, -- 90.

(b) Thus there is something which does not sound intirely right in these Lines:

Full shines the Father in the Filial Frame, Od. 4, 199.
He ceas'd: the *Filial Virtue* made reply, 22, 167.
Mean time *Arete* for the Hour of Rest
Ordains the fleecy Couch — 7, 428.
The Peers reproach the sure *Divine* of Fate, 20, 432.

Within the *Stricture* of the Palace Wall, 22, 186.
Impossumate with Pride — 20, 358.
With *Venial* Freedom let me now demand
Thy Name — 1, 219.

There cling *implicit*, and confide in *Jove*, 9, 514.

The *Seneshal* rebuk'd, in haste withdrew, 4, 47.
A *Cenotaph* I raise of deathless Fame, 4, 794.

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Province, may become less fit to be us'd in common. If so, it may require Caution in inserting some that are *appropriated* to particular Persons or Things, many that are us'd much in the *Professions*, especially in the *Scholastick* way of Distinctions, and all in general that are perplex'd, or not to be understood without Difficulty.

I'm afraid I have tired you, *Philypsus*, with such a string of dry Observations: they must have their Turn in a View of this Nature; and to omit what is necessary, for fear of an Imputation of Pedantry, is perhaps the worst Pedantry one can be guilty of.

Give me leave to enlarge more upon the Abuse of Epithets, as I did before upon the Use of them. 'Tis the same with these, *Philypsus*, as with all other Ornaments of Speech; their being so very serviceable, may lead to a larger Use of them than is proper: but there is this Advantage too; the very thing which makes them so strong and beautiful, will help to discover any Error in their Application. They are each connected so immediately to their Subject, that their Impropriety, as well as Agreement, is very easily discern'd.

On

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On (a) this Account, we should be the more cautious how we mix the Epithets of the *Proper*, with any *Metaphorical* Expressions: These for the Time change their Nature, and may signify things very different from what they stood for before. That Metaphor, which puts the Name of a *Place* or *Country* for its *Inhabitants*, is reckon'd a great and agreeable one; but where-ever it is used, we must remember it stands now for *Men*, and is not to be consider'd in its proper state, as a *Part of the Earth*. If its old Epithets are still applied to it, the Sense must be disagreeing and confus'd.

I fear we meet with something of this, where *Penelope* complains of the Numbers and Importunity of her Suitors, after this manner:

Zacynthus, green with ever-shady Groves,
And Ithaca, presumptuous boast their loves;
Obtruding on my choice a second Lord,
 (b) They press the *Hymenean* rite.—

(a) Δεῖ καὶ τὰ ἐπίθετα καὶ τὰς μεταφορὰς ἀρμολογίας λέγειν. τὸτο δ' ἔστι ἐκ τῆ ἀναλόγου· εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἀσυνεπὲς φανείη, διὰ τὸ παρεῖν ἄλλῃ τὰ ἐναντία μάλιστα φαίνεσθαι. *Aristot. Rhetor. Lib. 3. Cap. 2.*

(b) *Od. 19, 155.*——131.

Longinus, (a) somewhere in his *Treatise on the Sublime*, gives us an instance of this sort of Metaphor, from *Herodotus*, where that Historian is speaking of a very moving Tragedy, at the *Acting* of which the Theatre burst into Tears: This the Critick judges to be so taking, from the Surprize that Turn of Expression carries with it. The Metaphor itself has certainly something great in it: But had *Herodotus* join'd some of its proper Epithets or Description with this Metaphor, and said, that "*The Theatre, rais'd all on Columns of the Corinthian Order, burst into Tears at the Deepness of the Tragedy,*" *Longinus* might have thought the passage more *Surprizing*; but I dare say he would not have thought it so worthy of his Commendation.

To mix these things in a Description is really as absurd, as to paint a *River-God*, not with his *Urn*, to signify what he is; but gushing all over into Streams, like some of the odd Figures in *Ovid's Metamorphosis*: and by the way, it may be a very good (b) Rule that is given, to try mixt Metaphors at any time; by forming in one's Mind a Picture from what is said, and considering how the

(a) Cap. 24. Ed. Oxon. 1718.

(b) *Spectator*, No. 595.

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Parts of it would agree, were they delineated upon Canvas.

There is another Disagreement in Epithets, when two Expressions, proper in themselves, are yet join'd together improperly. After a great Slaughter we may very well have a Notion of *Heaps*, or (as it is in the Poetical Language) *Mountains of the Slain*; 'tis natural on the same Occasion to imagine to ourselves their Wounds, and the *Blood ebbing* out of them: these are very proper separately; but to join them under the Notion of a (*a*) *Bleeding Mountain*, does not look so reconcileable to the Mind.

An Error yet more frequent is, when we give a Word that Epithet, which is proper to it on some Occasions, indifferently at all Times, and without any Occasion.

This, in some measure, has been always allowable in Verse: however such a Liberty is not without its Bounds, nor should it be used intemperately. *Purple* (for instance) is an Epithet very frequent in the Ancient Poets for the Habit of Princes: yet it is not to be given to that of all Great Men; nor of Princes equally,

(a) *Od.* 22, 135. — 118.

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whether (a) young or old; nor of the very same Prince, under several Circumstances. Tho' a Remark of this kind may seem insignificant enough, the Neglect of it in Practice is often very gross and shocking.

Again: What is proper in one Language, may not be so in another. Was any one to translate the *purpureis Oloribus* of Horace, *purple Swans*, would not he be so *Literal*, as to miss the *Sense* of his Author intirely? The same I suspect a little in this, and several other of our Poets, who generally translate the *Purpureum mare* of the *Latins*, and Πορφύρεον πέλαγος of the *Greeks*, by *Purple Seas*.

There may be another Impropriety from the difference of time and circumstances: It may do very well to give the Epithet of *browsing* to a Goat; or *grazing* to the Ox: it helps to describe them in the Fields, or to distinguish them from some other Creatures; and if neither of these, at least it gives the Language a Poetical Air: Yet these Epithets have some restraints, they belong to Life and Action; they do not suit with those very Creatures when Dead; and less so, when they are cut out in the Shambles, or serv'd up at a Feast: this is the Case

(a) Δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ὡς νέφ φαινίχης, ἕως γέροντι τι
οὐ γὰρ ἡ αὐτὴ πρέπει ἐκείνης. *Arist. Rhet. Lib. 3. Cap. 2.*
in

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in a Passage relating to *Penelope's* Suitors; they,

—A luxurious race, indulge their chear;
Devour the *grazing Ox*, and *browsing Goat*,
(a) And turn the gen'rous Vintage down their throat.

As Epithets should be proper to the *Things*, or *Person*, they are applied to; so must we take Care that they are still proper to the *Metaphors* we add; and in Allegory, not to confound the Epithets of the *Real*, with those of the *Fictitious Person*.

In the Preface to the *Iliad* (b) we have an excellent Distinction to this Purpose, on a known (c) Epithet of *Apollo*; "Which
" (as we are there told) is capable of two
" Explications; one Literal, in respect
" of the Darts and Bow, the Ensigns of
" that God; the other Allegorical, with
" regard to the Rays of the Sun: there-
" fore in such Places, where *Apollo* is re-
" presented as a God in Person, I would
" use the former Interpretation; and
" where the Effects of the Sun are de-
" scrib'd, I wou'd make Choice of the
" latter." You see the justness of the
Observation: it may serve to explain my
Meaning better than I could express it
myself.

(a) *Od.* 17, 621, — 535.

(b) Page 22. 12mo.

(c) Ἐπὶ ἥολος.

'Tis evident, by the Way, that Mr. Pope form'd this Observation upon his Experience in the Progress of that Translation: This appears from the first Part of that Work, in which we sometimes find the Properties and Effects of the Sun blended with the personal Acts of *Apollo*: thus it is in the first Appearance of that Deity in the Poem. I shall read the Passage to you, tho' something long: it begins with that beautiful Line,

Silent * he wander'd by the sounding Shore:
Till safe at Distance to his God he prays,
That God, who darts around the World his Rays.

O *Smintheus*, sprung from fair *Latona's* Line,
Thou guardian Power of *Cilla* the divine,
Thou Source of Light, whom *Tenedos* adores,
And whose bright Presence gilds thy *Chrysa's* shores;
God of the Silver-Bow! thy Shafts employ,
(a) Avenge thy Servant, and the *Greeks* destroy.

The Original here does not once attribute any thing to the Deity but what is personal: 'tis certain the Sun and its Effects are hid under this Allegory; but then they must be hid: for so far as it appears, it will cease to be Allegory. *Homer* never mixes shadows and reality; and as Mr. Pope perceiv'd this in his going on with the Poem, I presume he built upon it that excellent Observation.

* *Chryses*.

(a) *Il.* 1, 60, — 42.

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Any mixture of this Nature is more evident in Epithets, for that obvious Reason I mention'd before. And thus, you see, there are Inconveniencies attend each Method of improving the Poetical Diction; and that the danger bears some Proportion to the Excellence. Where the finest Colourings are employed, the faulty strokes of the Pencil are the sooner perceiv'd. The noblest Efforts of Human Art are not without their Defects. Of all Doctrines, I shall never hold that, which supposes any Man to be infallible: and of all Men, the Poet of a true, free, glowing Spirit, must naturally be incapable of that Character. No, *Philypus*, the most correct Writer is he that has the fewest Faults: and he is the noblest Poet that has most distinct Excellencies.

You need not repeat, says *Philypus*, what you have thoroughly convinc'd me of long since. Yes, 'tis the (a) Condition of every human Performance, not to be absolutely perfect. I can allow of seeing Faults in any the most favourite Piece, and find a fresh and greater Pleasure every Day in reading an Author without that

(a) Whoever thinks a faultless Piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

Bias, which used to make me admire every thing I read. Yet I must own my Infirmary to you, I still find it very difficult to arrive to that Indifference you would persuade me to, in any tolerable Degree.

A perfect Indifference (answer'd *Antiphauts*) is no more attainable, than a perfect Excellence, by a Creature made up of so many Passions as Man is. We must poise ourselves with all the Steadiness we are Masters of; and when those Disturbers will be interfering, the best way is to turn their own Artillery upon them, and to play one Passion upon another. If the superior Merit of a Writer, or his engaging way, is apt to captivate us so far as to raise any partial regards in us; we must stop, and consider what we owe to Truth, the most beautiful and commanding thing in the World: On the contrary, where-ever we begin to feel a malicious Pleasure in finding out the Faults of Great Men, we must break off that humour as soon as perceiv'd, by turning immediately to some of the finest Passages in their Works, and indulging that Delight and Admiration they raise in us.

I do this, (reply'd *Philypsus*) and yet it is but too frequently that I find myself more engag'd than I ought to be, after
all

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all my Endeavours : How happy should I be, could I have that command of my Temper, which *Antiphaus* shews upon all Occasions !

If you have observ'd any thing in me of that Nature (says *Antiphaus* interrupting him) it is chiefly owing to the Observance of this Rule, " When we " are thinking of any particular Passage, " to forget the Character of the Author: " and when we are speaking of the Character of the Author, to forget the " Turn of any particular Passage." Our Notion of a Poem is not to be influenc'd by a few Lines, taken here and there from it : the only thing by which it can be justly determin'd, is the Balance of the Account, after reckoning up all its Beauties and all its Defects, against one another. I mean, not only as to their *Number*, but according to the real *Value*, or *Alloy* that is in them. But what am I doing, *Philypsus* ? to talk at this rate, while I might be enjoying your Observations ? — The things I have heard you speak of at different Times, make me long to see them in one collected View. We are here safe from the Impertinence of Business, or Visits ; and may enjoy ourselves at large, without being interrupted by either.

I am sensible (answer'd *Philyppus*, after a short pause) that what you particularly mean, is the Improvements in Mr. *Pope's* Translation, from the many Figures and Variations added in that Work: but as I am not prepared for a regular Account of them, you will give me leave to mention them just as they come into my Thoughts. My happiness is, that I speak to so generous a Friend: I know *Antiphaus* too well to make Apologies for the Weakness of my Observations, or the loose manner in which I may lay my Thoughts before him.

(a) "To be *Clear*, and *not* to be *Mean*,
 " is the great Excellence of Language.
 " A Style that is made up wholly of *proper*
 " Words, will be the clearest of any,
 " but at the same Time it will necessarily
 " be mean: On the contrary, the im-
 " prov'd *figurative* Style is great; but if
 " it be crowded every-where with Fi-
 " gures and new Turns, it must grow
 " dark and barbarous."

If this Rule be just, as it has ever been allow'd to be, (quite down from the Great Father of Criticism at *Athens*, to those who flourish now in the Academy of *Paris*) all additional Figures in this

(a) From *Aristotle's* Lib. de Poet. Cap. 22.

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Translation, which neither darken nor perplex the Sense, are so many new Beauties and Improvements upon the Original.

For my part, I should not stick at carrying this Point farther; I should imagine, That Figures are the Language of the Passions. The Body itself is agitated, and our Features discomposed, when the Mind is struck violently with any Object; and if we speak upon such Occasions, 'tis with rapidity and disorder. We burst out into Exclamations: our Sentiments are quick and violent, and our Language interrupted frequently with sudden Starts, and as sudden Pauses. Things appear then more strong and largely to the Mind; we paint them in more expressive Colours, and with a greater Energy of Words. 'Tis this way of speaking that gave rise to what the Criticks afterwards call'd Figures. These are the beautiful Disorders of Language; they are in our Words what sudden Agitations are in our Minds; and tho' we may think them chiefly the effect of Art, they are really some of the most natural strokes in Poetry.

When we are struck suddenly with Joy or Sorrow, Hopes or Fears, we break out in a short quick manner of Expression.

— *Ulysses*, in the Habit of a Stranger,
finds

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finds the good old *Laertes* ever sorrowing for his Absence, and busying himself in his Garden, to divert the melancholy of his Thoughts. The Hero does not discover himself immediately; only just mentions to him, that he had seen *Ulysses* in his Travels. That is the Point *Laertes* fixes upon: *This Island you are landed upon* (says he) *is Ithaca*;

But tell me, Stranger, be the Truth confess'd,
What years have circled since thou saw'st that guest?
That hapless guest, alas! for ever gone!
Wretch that he was! and that I am! my Son!
If ever Man to misery was born,
(a) 'Twas his to suffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!

Ulysses in his Answer informs him where he had met with his Son; and that when they parted, he flatter'd himself with hopes of seeing him again; but now, he found, he must despair of that happiness. This was too much for *Laertes* to bear: we see him overcome with Sorrow. 'Tis now *Ulysses's* turn to be agitated, and to speak his Passions in the same impetuous manner:

He ran, he seiz'd him with a strict embrace,
With thousand kisses wander'd o'er his face,
" I, I am he; Oh Father, rise! Behold,
" (b) Thy son! ———

(a) *Od.* 24, 339.—289.

(b) *Od.* 24, 376.—320.

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I can scarce leave the pleasure I take in repeating these Passages, only to tell you, that they are extremely improv'd by Mr. Pope. No one will imagine how much, that has not compar'd them with the Original.

You see these Passions break out in short violent Flashes: sometimes they are so strong as to permit no more than one word or two. When *Euryclea* by accident discovers *Ulysses*, she can only cry out (a) *My Son!*—*My King!*—And where any go farther, they rather *hint* at things than *mention* them: Their Thoughts are full of starts and hurry; they speak with vehemence, and often end abruptly. Thus *Ulysses*, when he discovers himself to *Telemachus*:

I am thy Father. O my Son! my Son!
That Father, for whose sake thy days have run
(b) One scene of woe, &c.

And in another Place from a different Passion:

O curst event! and Oh unlook'd-for aid!
Melanthius, or the women have betray'd—
(c) Oh my dear Son!—

(a) *Od.* 19, 554,—475.

(b) *Od.* 16, 208,—189.

(d) *Od.* 22, 166,—152.

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These passionate *Breaks* are one of the finest things in Poetry. They are as natural in Anger, as they are in Sorrow or Surprizes ; and indeed in the former are proper sooner, and upon less motives far than in these. I know not how it is, they have a particular aptness in all Threats, and either intimate very strongly, or are very well fill'd up with some menacing Action :

This choice is left you, to resist or die ;
(a) And die, I trust, ye shall.—

Or, as in the *Nineteenth Book*,

Vagrant, be gone ! before this blazing brand
(b) Shall urge—and wav'd it hissing in her hand.

You have puzzled me, says *Antiphaus*: Now for my Life can't I tell which to approve of most, the expressing, or the intimating the Action in such Cases: this requires the greatest strength in the Poet, and the other has greater force in his Performance. Oh, give me leave to mention one thing,—Have you not observ'd a larger sort of Break, which is used artificially in a Poem, to incite the Attention of the Reader ? I mean, when

(a) *Od.* 22, 81,—67.

(b) *Od.* 19, 85,—69.

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the Narration is dropt in the most engaging parts of it, or just before some very material Incident: This adds a double desire of hearing; the Audience generally make it their Request, that the Speaker would go on, and inform them of the Sequel. Thus it is in the Eleventh *Odyssey*: *Ulysses* in the midst of his Account of the Infernal Regions (a) makes a feint of concluding; we are immediately told that the *Phæacians* were eager to hear him on; and it is observable, that the very (b) same Break, and the very same Sentiment after it, is imitated by *Virgil*. 'Tis indeed improv'd in the latter; he has all the Use of *Homer's* suspense, without the Tedioufness of it.

I have often taken notice of this Artifice, says *Philypsus*. 'Tis very usual in the Close of the particular Books, not only of this Poem, but equally of the *Iliad* and *Æneid*.—Were it not a thing pretty obvious in itself, I should be apt to imagine, that it was from this practice of *Homer* and *Virgil*, that those prudent

(a) *Od.* 11. 408.—328. —Κηληθιμῶ —ἔρχομαι
Ver. 333. And Ver. 369. *Alcinous* desires him to proceed.

— (b) *Donec Calchante ministro*—
Tum vero ardemus scitari. — *Æn.* 2, 100 and 105.

Authors,

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Authors, who write for Sale, had learnt what is so common among them: Thus, in our Books of Adventures and Romance, we seldom meet with a First Part, which does not break off in such a point of the Story, as may be most apt to engage the Expectation of the Reader; and to draw him in for that most tedious thing in the World, vulgarly call'd, *A Second Part*.

There is yet another sort of Breaks, *Antiphaus*, which proceed not from the Artifice of the Writer, but the Passion he feels upon some great or unexpected Calamity. There might be Instances of this given from the Poem before us; but we must go to another piece of Mr. *Pope's* for the finest that ever I met with in my Life. 'Tis in his charming *Ode on Musick*, where he is speaking of that great Master of it, *Orpheus*:

(a) See wild as the winds o'er the mountains he flies,
Hark, *Hemus* resounds with the *Bacchanals* cries!
—— Ah, see! he dies.

Those Passions, which break off our Language in this manner, and confine it to short catches and starts, when they are wrought up to the highest pitch, or croud in many of them together upon

(a) *Stanza* the 6th.

the Mind, are best exprest by *Silence*. Such Silences as these (pardon me a Paradox as old as (a) *Pythagoras's* times) are the voice of Nature. 'Tis true, in the common Method of speaking, there are only a few particular Organs concern'd: but in stronger Emotions, in the violence of any Passion, the whole Body may be Talkative. Every Look, and Turn, and Motion is significant; and each Nerve can have its share in making up (what our *Shakespeare* calls) a kind of *Excellent Dumb Discourse*.

To be more plain: Our Passions are often too strong to be express'd immediately by words; they often choak up the passage for them; and yet at the same time they are most apparent. The more any one is a stranger to art and disguises, the more is he moved on these Occasions: these Silences are the pure effects of Nature; and the Descriptions of them are some of the most natural, as well as most beautiful Passages in the Poem before us.

The Recovery of *Ulysses* is the Incident of the greatest concern to all his Friends,

(a) Ἡ σιωπὴ ὑπὲρ τῶν θεῶν σφισίν (the Disciples of *Pythagoras*) ἐπήσκητο πολλά γὰρ θεῶν τε καὶ ἀπόρρητα ἤκουον ὧν κρατεῖν χαλεπὸν ἦν, μὴ παρῶτον μαθεῖσιν, ὅτι καὶ τὸ ΣΙΩΠΙΑΝ ΛΟΓΟΣ. *Philostatus de Vita Apol. Lib. 1. Cap. 1.*

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and must be attended with the strongest flow of Passion in them: accordingly they are each too much mov'd with the discovery, to utter their Sentiments on that Occasion. *Telemachus* is the first to whom *Ulysses* makes himself known: He falls on his Father's Neck, and they continue embracing each other, without speaking (a) for a considerable time.—We have a like Scene, (b) when he discovers himself to two or three select Friends. Good old *Laertes*, on the same Occasion, is not only silent, but scarce (c) able to support himself, under such an excess of Passion; and the fond, tender *Penelope* is quite overcome with it:

(d) She sickens, trembles, falls, and faints away.

A great Surprise, or extraordinary Fright, has the same Effect: as in *Homer's* (e) *Eurylochus*, and the Sir *Trevisan* of *Spencer*, which the (e) Notes mention as a Parallel to *Eurylochus*. Never was any Image set in a fuller Light than this of *Spencer's*: 'tis presented to our View

(a) *Od.* 16, 243,—220.

(b) *Od.* 21, 240,—226.

(c) *Od.* 24, 404,—346.

(d) *Od.* 23, 212,—205.

(e) *Od.* 10, 288,—246.

with

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with all the strength that Poetry is capable of. I must beg leave to read it to you:

He answer'd nought at all, but adding new
Fear to his first amazement, staring wide
With stony eyes, and heartless hollow hue,
Astonish'd stood, as one that had espy'd
Infernal furies with their chains unty'd:
Him yet again, and yet again bespake
The gentle Knight; who nought to him reply'd,
But trembling ev'ry joint, did inly quake.

Admirable Imagery! and admirable Silence! cry'd *Antiphaus*. But I hope you will not be so possessed with the excellence of our Poet, as to forget (a) the *Ajax* of *Homer*; whom *Ulysses* bespeaks again, and yet again, without any Answer at all. Or perhaps this has been observ'd upon so often, that you think it needless to repeat its Beauties: I don't question but you admire it very much. I do so, (answer'd *Philypsus*) and agree intirely with the Observation, (b) "That *Ajax* has more the air of Grandeur when he says nothing, than when the Poet makes him speak."

Mr. *Pope* does not only follow *Homer* very finely, where-ever he has led the Way in these beautiful Figures; he some-

(a) *Od.* 11, 665, — 537.

(b) Note *ibid.* and *Longinus*, 8'.

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times heightens, and sometimes adds them with a great deal of Propriety. Every one sees how unwilling *Calypso* is to part with *Ulysses*: But the Command of *Jove* must be obeyed: and the same fondness which makes her look on the departure of that Hero with extreme regret, engages her, at the same time, to assist him in the conveniencies for it. She is always directing him, when employ'd; and when not, secretly dissuading him from his Voyage. We see her busy, even to Officiousness, in bringing him the Instruments for his Work, guiding him to the Forest, and shewing what Trees are fittest for his Purpose:

(a) On the lone Island's utmost verge there stood
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whole leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or fear'd by heav'nly fire.
Already dry'd.—These pointing out to view, [drew.
The nymph just shew'd him, and with tears with-

This is much better express'd than in the Original: indeed there we scarce discern that it is a passionate Silence. Improvements of this kind, *Antiphaus*, are the more to be valu'd, because there is not any one thing in Poetry of greater Beauty and Energy. The Criticks look

(a) *Od.* 5, 305,—238.

upon it as the most (a) sublime, unusual part of Eloquence: and 'tis none of its least Advantages, that it hits that excellent Rule they give us, *Of (b) leaving some things for the Audience to perceive of themselves*: Tho' it be not told him, every Man very easily finds out the heightning of such a Circumstance; and is sure to value it the more, because he finds it out himself. In short, these are masterly strokes, and few hands arrive to them in their true Excellence. Tho' it requires the greatest Art and Judgment to introduce it, the Writer, when he has chose the proper Point, seems to be put to no pains to rule our Affections: he governs all our Passions without the Labour of Words; and looks as *Archimedes* would to one's fancy, moving the whole World, while he *sits still* himself.

Suspense and Doubt have something of this Figure intermixt with them. A Speaker hesitating and unresolv'd, is in a State of *Half-silence*: As we see the former poetical Silence is observ'd in *Homer* every time *Ulysses* discovers himself

(a) Φωνῆς δὲ ἄτακτα καὶ ἀκατάστατα πότε φιλοκατασκευάζειν ἔννοια δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ μέγα ληπνόν. *Longinus*, θ'. And *Cicero*, *Rarum est eloquenter loqui; rarius, eloquenter tacere.* Ep. ad *Atticum*. L. 13.

(b) See *Dem. Phal.* Σκδ^ν.

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to any of his nearer Friends; so is there a mixture of this Doubtfulness also in each of those Interviews: Thus *Telemachus*, on that Occasion;

Thou art not—no, thou canst not be my Sire;
Heav'n such illusion only can impose,
(a) By the false joy to aggravate my woes.

The *Unravelling* of the Doubt is what strikes us most, both in *Laertes* and *Penelope*: in the latter Case, this is deferr'd for too long a time; however, as they are, they afford us some of the most pathetic Passages in the whole Poem. In what an affecting Manner does *Laertes* appear to us just at the point of his being convinc'd, that the Stranger he is conversing with, is his Son!

Smit with the signs which all his doubts explain,
His heart within him melts; his knees sustain
Their feeble weight no more: his arms alone
Support him, round the lov'd *Ulysses* thrown;
He faints, he sinks with mighty joys oppress'd:
Ulysses clasps him to his eager breast.

Soon as returning Life regains its seat,
And his breath lengthens, and his pulses beat;
Yes, I believe, he cries: Almighty *Jove*! —
Heav'n rules us yet, and Gods there are above.
(b) 'Tis so. — — —

(a) *Od.* 16, 217.—195.

(b) *Od.* 24, 411.—351.

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As to *Penelope*: Where a Modern would have been overjoy'd, and caught immediately at an Occasion for so many raptures, the *Greek* Poet chuses rather to shew her Prudence than her Passion. I believe every body will agree, that this *still Interval* is not ill-chosen: the fault of it is, its being carried through too many Lines. The Queen, no doubt, struggled hard all the while; she had difficulty enough in restraining herself; and the moment she is convinc'd, she is all Tenderness and Passion.

While yet he speaks, her pow'rs of Life decay,
She sickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:
At length recov'ring, to his arms she flew,
And strain'd him close, as to his breast she grew;
The tears pour'd down amain: And, Oh, she cries,
Let not against thy Spouse, thine anger rise!
O! vers'd in every turn of human art,
Forgive the weakness of a woman's heart—
O let me, let me not thine anger move,
That I forbore—hu—thus—to speak my love;
Thus in fond kisses, while the transport warms,
Pour out my Soul, and die within thy arms!—
(a) I yield, I yield! my own *Ulysses* lives.

This unravelling of a *Doubt* is generally follow'd by what is the most contrary to it of any thing in the World, *Precipitation*. To doubt of any happy

(a) *Od.* 23, 240.—230.

Circumstance, is to fear that it should not prove true. When we are agitated by the Expectation of some Bliss, we long to indulge that Flow of Spirits which it occasions; only some particular Caution forces us to restrain them in the midst of their Career: The moment our Doubt is clear'd, and the Obstacle remov'd, they rush on with the greater Violence and Impetuosity. Then are our Words quick and vehement; we speak short and fast; a thousand things we want to say, and are so eager we don't know which of them to say first. I know nothing in Musick that strikes one equally to those sudden Pauses, when the Concert stops at once; and after the still Interval, breaks out unexpectedly into a full Tumult of Harmony. ~~This~~ Pause, and the Imperuoufness that succeeds upon it, is the case (to carry on a Scene, which we have touch'd upon twice or thrice already) when *Telemachus* recognizes his Father: *Telemachus* wants to know every thing at once; and *Ulysses* wants to tell him every thing as fast:

All, all, *Ulysses* instant made reply,
(a) I tell thee all, my Son! —

(a) *Od.* 16, 249,—226.

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Such an Hurry of Spirits, the more violent it is, makes us speak in the more broken and interrupted manner. You always see that a Crowd is the longest in getting out of a place, where they are in the greatest Haste, and press most. When the Passions are less disturb'd, they go in Train, and follow one another easily; but if they move all of them for a Passage at the same time, they hinder one another: This sort of Precipitation is very well expressed in *Penelope*, upon receiving *Telemachus* after his Voyage:

Few words she spoke, tho' much she had to say,
And scarce those few for tears cou'd force their
way.

Light of my Eyes! He comes!—Unhop'd-for Joy!
Has Heaven from *Pylas* brought my lovely boy?
So snatch'd from all our cares! Tell, hast thou known
(a) Thy Father's Fate? and tell me all thy Own.

You cannot imagine, *Antiphaus*, the full heightning of this Passage, without comparing it with the Original: 'Tis the same case in most that I have mention'd; they are some of the justest Improvements in the Poem, as well as Instances of the best sort of Figures, such as shew the Passions of the Mind in a strong and lively manner. There are

(a) *Od.* 17, 55,—44.

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other which the Poet makes use of, sometimes to raise and diversify his Language; sometimes to give stronger Colours to the things he describes; and sometimes to engage, or possess his Readers. I need not enter into a long Inquiry concerning the more known Figures of either kind; but shall touch upon one or two, which as yet have not been introduced by the Criticks into their *Systems*.

Poetical Prophecy, is when we acquaint the Reader before-hand of some Events, which will happen in the Progress of the Poem: *Prevention* is when we speak of such things, yet to come, as if they were already present. *Prevention* gives an uncommon Greatness and Energy to the Language: It places distant Actions full before our Eyes, and carries a certain Boldness and Assurance with it, that is very becoming. The *other* is of great Strength in possessing and captivating the Reader; we love to look on into Futurity: Thus it flatters the Powers and Capacity of our own Minds, at the same time that it gives an Air of superior Knowledge and Authority to the Poet.

From the Invocation of the Muse in the entrance to his Poem, the Poet has a Right of Prophefying; and it might be partly from this, that the Name of *Prophet* and *Poet* has, in some Languages, been

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been us'd in common, But tho' he may and does prophesy in Person, things of this Nature are usually introduc'd from others: as from Superior Beings; from Priests and Augurs; from (a) Persons in the other State; or just at the (b) Point of departing from this. This latter Method perhaps may carry the greater Sanction with it; but the other is the more Poetical.

Some of the strongest Speeches in *Hommer* and *Virgil* are deliver'd after this manner, by Men of the Prophetick Character. It is to this Figure (if you will give me leave to call it so) that the *Sixth Book* of the *Æneid*, and the *Fourth* of the *Odyssey*, owe the greatest share of their Beauty. Even the frightful Raptures of *Theoclymenus*, and the *Harpie* of *Virgil*, engage the Reader with a sort of pleasing Terror. There is something horribly delightful in these Lines:

Floating in gore, portentous to survey!
In each discolour'd vase the Viands lay:
Then down each cheek the Tears spontaneous flow,
And sudden Sighs precede approaching woe.

(a) As *Tiresias* in the 11th *Odyssey*; or *Anchises* in the 6th *Æneid*.

(b) See *Il. π'*. Ver. 844 and 852. *Æn.* 10. 739.

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In vision rapt, the * *Hyperæstian* Seer

Up-rose, and thus divin'd the Vengeance near :

O Race to Death devote ! with *Strygian* shade

Each destin'd Peer impending Fates invade :

With tears your wan distorted cheeks are drown'd,

With sanguin drops the walls are ruby'd round :

Thick swarms the spacious hall with howling

To people *Orcus*, and the burning Coasts ! [Ghosts,

Nor gives the Sun his golden Orb to roll,

(a) But universal Night usurps the Pole !

I beg pardon (says *Antiphaus*) but the Speech of *Theoclymenus* is a particular Favourite of mine : and now you repeat it in *English*, I seem to want something of that strong Pleasure it used to afford me, where the *Greek* speaks (b) *Of the Sun being perisht out of Heaven, and of Darkness rushing over the Earth* ; I cannot express the Fulness of the Words——But you know the Original ; and, I fear, will never see a Translation equal it. This whole Prophetical Vision of the Fall of the Suitors, is the *True Sublime* ; and, in particular, gives us an higher *Orientalism* than we meet with in any other part of *Homer's* Writings. You will pardon me a new Word, where we have no old one to my Purpose : You know what I mean,

* *Theoclymenus*.

(a) *Od.* 20, 430.—357.

(b) ————— *Ἡέλιος δὲ
Οὐρανὸν ἔξ' ἀπόλωλε, κακὴ δ' ἐπιδέδωκεν ἀχλὺς.*

That

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That *Eastern way of expressing Revolutions in Government, by a Confusion or Extinction of Light in the Heavens.* It is this manner of Expression which works up that Speech the nearest of any to those noble Passages in holy Scripture; (a) "*I will shew Wonders in the Heavens and in the Earth, Blood and Fire, and Pillars of Smoak; the Sun shall be turn'd into Darknesh, and the Moon into Blood.*—(b) *I will cause the Sun to go down at Noon, and I will darken the Earth in the clear Day.*—(c) *All the bright Lights of Heaven will I make dark over thee, and set Darknesh upon thy Land.*"

I have often wonder'd, *Philypsus*, at some particular Persons, who are ever ravish'd with any thing of the Sublime in common Authors, and yet seem to have no taste for the finest touches of this kind, those which are so frequent in our Sacred Writings. With what Greatness and Sublimity do they abound? Such as might persuade, that we are not only blest with *Instructions*, but favour'd too with a *Language* from Heaven. Those Sacred Pages want only to be read with a common regard, that all Men might acknowledge them to contain the greatest

(a) *Joel* ii. 31.

(b) *Amos* viii. 9.

(c) *Ezek*: xxxii. 8.

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Master-pieces of Eloquence. Yes, *Philippus*, it is there that Eloquence sits beside the Throne of Truth, in all her noblest Attire, and with a Look that strikes us at once with Reverence and Delight. I long to expatiate on so glorious a Subject; but perhaps we may find a Time of joining together in some View of this Nature: There has been a very good (a) Example set the World this last Summer; and if ever we should follow it, and enter thoroughly into this sort of Criticism, I dare say it will make any other kind look poor and insipid, when compared with it.—But at present we are in another Sphere; and I have already interrupted you too much.—

Philippus, desirous as he was to launch immediately into those noble Depths of Eloquence, complied for the present, and return'd to the point in hand: “My last Instance from the *Odyssey* prevents what I had design'd for the next: You see, it speaks all along of future things, as if they were actually present.” *Theoclymenus* has the whole fact passing successively before his Eyes: The Destruction of the Suitors is pictur'd in his Mind; he sees their *Blood* sprinkled upon the Walls;

(a) *Blackwall's Sacred Classics.*

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their *Bodies* floating in Gore, and their *Souls* sinking to the Regions of the Dead.

Now I am upon this head of *Prophecy* and *Prevention*, I should be very defective, were I to omit the other Branch of it; which takes in all cases where the Poet forewarns us of Events in his own proper Person. This is to be found in the very same point, the Fate of the Suitors; but it is not deliver'd with the same Air of Enthusiasm: The *Poet* is inform'd by the Muse of Things to come, while the *Prophet* is possessed by Vision: The knowledge of one is from Instruction; of the other, from a sort of frantick Possession of Mind. The Poet therefore anticipates Events with less emotions of Language; and seldom rises into any fervor above what we meet with in these Passages:

——Incens'd they spoke,
While each to chance ascrib'd the wond'rous stroke;
Blind as they were—For death ev'n now invades
(a) His destin'd prey, and wraps them all in shades.

And before :

——In his Soul fond joys arise,
And his proud hopes already win the prize.
To speed the flying shaft thro' ev'ry ring,
Wretch! is not thine: the arrows of the King
(a) Shall end those hopes, and fate is on the wing.

(a) *Od.* 22, 38,—33.

(b) *Od.* 21, 104,—98.

You observe, *Antiphaus*, that this Event, which is so often anticipated by the Poet, is the great Point on which the Completion of his Fable turns: and I believe you may have observ'd, that *Virgil* puts on the Prophetick Air (a) exactly in the same Case. *Virgil* oftentimes improves upon his Master: the Circumstance that introduces that Passage in the *Æneid*, and the greater distance of time, give it a much finer and a nobler Air, than we find in *Homcr*, himself.

These Figures (for so I beg leave to call all unusual manners of Speech) are of more difficult Observation, as they lie out of the common road: I am afraid of wandering too far; and shall therefore return very readily to the more beaten Path.

All Passions warm the Imagination, and make its Images more strong and sensible. It is this, in my Opinion, that might render *Metaphors* very proper in the Pathetick: Tho' you and I, perhaps, should not agree intirely on that Head.

At least this is certain, that they strengthen and enliven the narrative Part of Poetry, beyond any other Method whatever; when the Poet treats of the

(a) See *Æn.* 10, 501.

most common things, he does not treat of them in the common manner:

Fame speaks the *Trojans* bold, they boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
To dart the spear, and guide the rushing car,
With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war.

(a) Strip these Lines of the Metaphor, and they lose their greatest Force and Beauty. To say barely (as it is in the Greek) *That the Trojans are good Warriors, that they launch the Spear, and handle the Bow well; that they manage their Horses dextrously; and in general, that they are very Strong and Successful in Battle:* This declares the whole of the thing; but, with Submission, 'tis more like a prose than a poetical Narration; at least, when compar'd with the same Sentiments in those Lines I have just repeated.

There are many Innovations of this kind, which make the English *Homer* appear with Advantage: A naked relation of Fact is enough for History; but Poetry requires something more than bare Truth: It has a thousand ways of raising and beautifying its Subject: *Phæbus*, like the Luminary over which he presides, does not only shew, but sets a Lustre too, on every thing he touches: The Poet is

(a) *Od.* 18, 308,—263.

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not so much to declare Events, as to give its Colours and Life to every Action : in doing this, nothing is so requisite as strong animated Figures ; as of all Figures the Metaphor affords the most sensible Strokes, and comes nearest to the Pencil.

Even in common Cases they are not without their Beauty ; thus in that Interview between *Ulysses* and *Lacertes* :

Beneath a neighb'ring tree, the chief divine
Gaz'd o'er his Sire, retracing every line,
The ruins of himself ! now worn away
(a) With age, yet still majestick in decay.

Thus *Agamemnon* (after all his dangers, murder'd by the hands of Villains in his own Kingdom) is not said barely *to die*, but to *End*,

(b) — *the sad Ev'ning of a stormy life.*

When this Figure expresses some strange Particularity, or includes any magnifying Comparison, one single Word is very powerful in raising the Narration, and enlarging our Ideas up to the Occasion :

With dreadful shouts *Ulysses pour'd* along,
(c) Swift as an Eagle, as an Eagle strong. —

(a) *Od.* 24, 272, — 232.

(b) *Od.* 4, 116, — 91.

(c) *Od.* 24, 622, — 537.

Now by the Sword, and now the Jav'lin fall;
 (a) The rebel Race, and Death had swallow'd all, &c.

I know no Case, in which Metaphors of a bold Sound are more proper, than in arrogant Speeches: When Men defy the Gods, or quarrel with the Dispensations of Providence. *Philatius* in the *Odyssy* is no arrogant Character; yet in one place (upon considering the Afflictions of his Prince, whose Piety and Virtue he was so well assured of) he falls into a Rant against Providence; in which the Language is as lively and vigorous, as the Sentiment is ill-grounded and absurd:

O *Jove*! for ever deaf to human cries;
 The tyrant, not the father of the skies!
 Unpiteous of the race thy will began:
 The fool of Fate, thy manufacture, Man,
 With penury, contempt, repulse, and care,
 (b) The gauling load of life is doom'd to bear.

These Metaphors (which are of that kind we may call *The audacious*) come very near the Spirit of *Oldham* and *Dryden*; who undoubtedly, in their Satirical Works, flash out into the greatest Boldnesses this way of any of our Writers: indeed, in both, there are some which may come too near to Prophaneness; but

(a) *Od.* 24, 612,—527.

(b) *Od.* 20, 256,—204.

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we must always take care not to attribute to the Poet, what he speaks under some other Person. A Devil is no longer a Devil, unless he be haughty, impenitent, and blaspheming: and *Dryden* is no more to be condemned than *Milton*, for making such impious Spirits speak according to their true Character.

What you assert, I take to be perfectly true, says *Antiphaus*; but were I blest with any Genius for Poetry, I own that a shocking Impiety should be one of the last things I would *chuse* to describe. And where it is chosen, there is room to be moderate, without injuring the Character with too great a shew of Goodness: We see that *Milton* is not so gross as *Dryden*; nor (a) *Virgil* so blunt as *Homer*.

(a) *Virgil* seldom descends to particulars: he chuses rather to say in general, *Atque Deos, atque astra vocat crudelia mater*. Even his *Mexentius* is more reserv'd than *Homer's* Deists: He rather ridicules than affronts; *Ast de me Divum pater atque Hominum Rex Viderit*. —Afterwards he grows a little Warmer, and more Metaphorical;

*Dextra mihi Deus, & telum quod missile libro,
Nunc adsint* —

Where he speaks plainest of all, *Virgil* touches upon his miserable fate in the very next line:

*Nec mortem horremus, nec Divum parcimus ulli:
Desine. Jam venio moriturus.* —

Æn. 10.

Well,

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Well, says *Philypsus*, there are other Points which you might chuse, and which serve as well for this sort of Metaphor : Thus all pious Frauds, infamous Priests, or any prevailing Superstition. Here the Figure retains much of the audacious Air, without any thing of Impiety in it. *Agamemnon* indeed goes too far in the *Iliad*, where he seems to neglect *Apollo*, as well as his Priest :

Hence, with thy laurel crown, and golden rod ;
Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy God :

(a) Mine is thy daughter, Priest——

Here is something of Irreverence to the God, and an evident Injustice to Man ; and the Poet very prudently condemns the Speech, before he delivers it in his Poem. But there is no such Mark set on one of *Hector's* ; nor does it at all infringe that Hero's Character, which is remarkably pious all through the Poem : He is speaking against a very popular Superstition, the Trade of Augury :

Ye Vagrants of the Sky ! your wings extend
Or where the Suns arise, or where descend ;
To right, to left, unheeded, take your way,
While I the dictates of high Heav'n obey.
Without a sign his Sword the brave Man draws,
(b) And asks no Omen but his Country's cause.

(a) *Il.* 1, 39,—29.

(b) *Il.* 12, 284,—243.

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This has the *audacious* Air, because it speaks contemptuously of a Practice, which was vulgarly look'd upon as religious and sacred; and is *just*, because it shews at the same time the greatest Reverence to the Gods: He obeys the Dictates of *Heaven*, but he contemns the Artifices of the *Priest*.

Whatever restraints this kind of Metaphor may deserve, there is another sort which has always been received with the greatest Liberty. The *animating* Metaphor, tho' the (a) most Sublime, and the most Daring of any, except what was last mention'd, is very common, and that even in the chastest Poets, and in the softest Pieces. It is this by which we give Action and Spirit to things that are still and insensible. This will raise the meanest Points in the World: it may treat mere *Names*, as if they were *Things*; and Things still and inanimate, as if they had Thought and Action. What might seem the most surprising is, that this method of raising things above their Nature has

(a) *Præcipue ex his oritur mira sublimitas, quæ audacia proxima periculo translationis attollitur: Tollerunt quum rebus sensu carentibus actum quendam & animos damus. Quintil. Lib. 8. Cap. 6. Aristotle and Phalereus say exactly the same. See the latter, Περὶ Ἑρμ. Πά.*

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nothing of ridiculous in it. We easily perceive this to be true : but I own, for my part, I should have been at a loss for the reason of it, had not I met with a (a) fine Observation in Mr. Pope's *Appendix* to this Work. I wonder now why I cou'd not before perceive, That *Ridicule* is confined to moral Agents, and obtains only where Choice and Freedom is directly concern'd. That this is the Case, is the more plain, because even among moral Agents, the very same thing, which if brought on by our own Folly, is a certain subject for Ridicule; when it proceeds from some inevitable Misfortune, (or Necessity) is the farthest from being ridiculous.

I am pleas'd to see, that this Figure stands on such good reason; for it is the very Life and Soul of Description. And might it not be of a larger Use, *Antiphaus*, than has commonly been observ'd? It is chiefly mention'd indeed of enlivening things inanimate; whereas possibly it may hold thro' the whole Chain of Beings in the World, as they rise gradually above one another. Thus, when we attribute any thing of absolute Perfection to the highest Orders of created Beings; any thing which we think Angelical to Man,

(a) *Od.* Vol. 5. p. 238.

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or any thing like Humanity or Virtue to Beasts, it might as well be included in this Branch of Metaphor, as when we give the Powers of Motion to things still; or Passions to things inanimate.

Nay, it may even return from the Lower to the Higher, when the Species of a lower Rank, upon the whole, has any (a) particular Excellence which the higher wants; or partakes of any (b) Excellence, which is common to them both, in a greater and more excellent Degree.

But it must be observ'd, that where this Figure, in its higher Notion, is applied to Intelligents, it must not be done with the same Indifference; or rather, it requires the strictest Caution.

The Poet is at liberty to attribute Action and Passions to any part whatever of the mute Creation: he may make the Woods, or any such Insensible, sympathize with his Grief, with the same freedom as any inferior Animals: we find it thus used particularly in all the *Pastoral* Writers, whether Ancient or Modern. Every Beast may have the Compassion of

(a) As when we amplify the Swiftneſs of an Hero, by comparing it to the Flight of an Eagle: Or

(b) The Swiftneſs of an Eagle, by comparing it to the Swiftneſs of the Winds.

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a Man ; but few Men can sustain the Properties of an Angel : Nothing would make a common Mortal so mean and ridiculous as such an Elevation. The same holds in the higher Intelligents: the First of the Angelick Order looks monstrously ridiculous, (as well as monstrously impious) when he would imagine an Equality, where there was an immutable Disproportion.

However, in some Cases, the Property of an Angel may be given to a Man. The Heathen Poets compare their greater Heroes to their Gods: And when the Christian Poet exalts any superior Genius, any Character that has something in it above the common race of Mortals, he may well draw some Expressions from the Order of Beings next above the Human. Had not Mr. *Addison* thought this justifiable, we should have lost one of the finest Amplifications imaginable.

(a) So, when an Angel by Divine command
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale *Britannia* past,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast ;
And pleas'd th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

But whither am I wandering, my *Antiphaus* ? You will think such Flights as

(a) See *Addison's Works*, Vol. 1. p. 78. 12mo,

these

these too Airy; surely I am got into the Wilds of Criticism!—I don't know what the World might think of you at present, says *Antiphaus*: but if ever Mr. Dryden's Scheme should take place, and the Poetical Characters of Angels be generally establish'd; what you may think the wildest of your Flights now, might then be of good Service this way in Poetry.—Be that as it will, says *Philypsus*, I believe I had better draw in my thoughts a little for the present, and keep to things that are more obvious and secure. All agree, that the giving *Thought* to things *insensible*, and *human Passions* to the *brute Part* of the Creation, is equally just and beautiful: and at the same time nothing is of greater Efficacy in rendering our Sentiments Rais'd and Poetical. That *The Sufferings of our Fellow-creatures affect our Souls by a natural Sympathy*, is a very good moral Sentence: but the Poet is to elevate this Effect of Misery: he invests her with a sort of new *Being*, and then gives her *Address* and *Action*. In Poetry our Tears (a) *speak*; our Misfortunes are (b) *Eloquent*; and Misery appears (c) in *Person* to plead for the Distress'd.

(a) *Od.* 10, 291,—248.

(b) *Od.* 6, 374,—311.

(c) *Od.* 6, 204,—169.

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When more uncommon things are transferred this way, the Metaphor may be safer, if it has some Grounds in the Fact, tho' it will bear very often without it. 'Tis allowable to represent the Sea; as flying back and astonished at the terrible (a) *Voice of the Cyclops*; but 'tis more close to attribute this Fear and Flight to it, when its Waves are (b) *drove asunder by the same Cyclops flinging a Rock into the Midst of it.*

Another thing, which made this Figure the stronger among the Ancients, was their Notion of *Genii*, or *presiding Deities*. In particular, there was scarce a River or Brook amongst them, but what had its *Genius*; and in speaking of these the Poets carry this Metaphor farther than in any other case whatever. What an Appearance does *Xanthus* and *Simois* make in the *Battle of Rivers*, which takes up the 21st *Iliad*? What a bold Draught is that of the *Nile*, in the Sea-fight at *Actium*, by (c) *Virgil*? And how much more Sublime than either, is even our Translation of the Sacred Writings, where it makes the *Deep* (d) *utter his voice, and lift up his hands on high?*

(a) As *Æn.* 3, 672.

(b) *Od.* 9, 581,—495.

(c) *Æn.* 8, 712.

(d) *Habakkuk* iii. 10.

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You may perceive I am run into another Figure; but it is of a kind so nearly allied to the *animating Metaphor*, that one often finds some difficulty in distinguishing the one from the other. Indeed when any of these *Personages* are introduced distinctly in full State, then it is something beyond Metaphor; but in short Sketches, it may pass very well under that Figure. There is nothing but a stronger Name adapted to the thing than its strictly proper Acceptation affords. I think, for Instance, that we need not seek for a new Figure in this Passage :

Aw'd by the Prince so haughty, brave and young,
(a) *Rage gnaw'd the Lip, Amazement chain'd the*
[Tongue:

Or for this :

In ev'ry forrowing soul I pour'd delight,
(b) *And Poverty stood smiling in my sight.*

In the close of this Poem, the Narration is elevated by a successive Chain of these *Metaphors* or *Fictions*, call them which you will. When the *Ithacensians* are rang'd in Arms against their Prince,

(a) *Od.* 20, 335,—268.

(d) *Od.* 17, 506,—421.

'tis not said, that they *shall Die*, but that
 (a) *Death attends them in the Field*.—To
 express *Ulysses's* aptness to forgive them;
 (b) *Oblivion is ready to stretch her Wings*
over their Offences.—As when they are
 shockt with their Crime, and fling down
 their Arms, there is this Voice from
 Heaven to effect it:

“Forbear ye Nations! your mad hands forbear
 “(c) *From mutual slaughter. Peace descends to spare.*”

These, *Antiphaus*, are the most remarkable things I have taken notice of, as to the Figures. I could have produc'd a greater number of excellent Lines from this Translation, had not I endeavour'd chiefly to give such Instances as contain'd, at the same time, some peculiar Improvements in them: You would be surprized to see how many Beauties they have, that are wanting in the Original.

Surely they who are the most rigid for Close-translating, will allow such beautiful Variations as these; which, without losing the Sentiments of the Original, only set a finer Turn upon them. Let

(a) *Od. 24, 540—470.*

(b) *Od. 24, 558—484.*

(c) *Od. 24, 618,—534.*

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them call them, if they please, glorious Offences, or beauriful Wandrings from the Letter: These are such Offences as one would wish to see more frequent than they are, and of which the best Translators are the most guilty.

For my part, I am particularly pleased, when I see a Translator reflect new Light upon his Original: where-ever this is done justly, it does not alter the Objects; it only makes them more bright and visible.

I believe, *Antiphaus*, you will not disapprove of some other Methods, us'd in the *English Odyssey* for this Purpose, which I am just going to lay before you. Sometimes the Language is rais'd and strengthen'd; sometimes the Order transpos'd to Advantage; in several Cases we have *Homer's* Thoughts inspirited by collateral Thoughts from other Authors: some little things are omitted, and some short strokes added, to correct the Sentiment, or to heighten the Colours in the Original.

Before you enter upon those Points, says *Antiphaus*, give me leave to mention some few things, which look like Blemishes, under the Subject you have just concluded.

It is allow'd, that Metaphors are the most useful of Figures to raise the Poetical

cal

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cal Stile, to give their Colour to our Descriptions, and a just Swelling and Relief to our Images; 'tis allow'd, that a Translator may add these Colours, where the Original is less Lively and Expressive, than the Subject may very well bear. The Faults then must lie, either in the Excess, or Impropriety of such Additions. Some things will not bear a strong Light, and others require to be flung into Shades.

Where there is no Occasion for Figures, they are at best only so many unnecessary Ornaments: I cannot see why a Quiver full of Arrows should be call'd (a) *A Store of flying Fates*; why a Fire should be term'd (b) *A burning Bed*; or a Libation (c) *The sable Wave of offer'd Wine*.

'Tis not the Disproportion of the Metaphor to the Thing, which might render these Expressions blameable: If any thing, 'tis the want of Occasion. When the Poet is to aggrandize small Subjects, we can bear with much bolder Metaphors than these: tho' it may not be proper to call a stream of Wine, by the Title of a *Sable Wave*, on common Occasions; yet when the Work requires heightening, we

(a) *Od.* 22, 136,—119.

(b) *Od.* 9, 449,—378.

(c) *Od.* 14, 499,—447.

may go so much farther, as to call a (a) *small Rivulet by the Name of the Ocean.*

If we judge by the *Occasion*, there can be but few liberties for Metaphor in common Conversation; I mean, the common Conversation of Poetry. Not that they are to be banish'd thence entirely; rather it will require them frequently: but it requires only such as are single, and not far remov'd from the Subject. When a Person is speaking to *Penelope*, in Commendation of *Ithaca*, he might be allow'd to say, that *Its Soil is rich; that it abounds in Corn; and that its Trees are laden with Fruit: Homer's Expressions scarce carry this so far; and yet I should think them preferable to these in the Translation:*

(b) In wavy Gold thy summer vales are dress'd;
Thy autumns bend, with copious fruits opprest'd.

Where the Original says, that *Eurynomus was among the Suitors of Penelope*, does not it seem better, as well as plainer, than this Translation?

———To climb with haughty fires

(c) The royal bed, *Eurynomus* aspires.

(a) As does *Virgil*, *Georg.* 4, 29.

(b) *Od.* 19, 131,—112. See V. 565. *ib.* 482.

(c) *Od.* 2, 28,—21.

A Metaphor may be continued too far, as well as carried too high: a long Chain of them leads us away from the proper Sense; and flings that into *Allegory*, which we intend for *Reality strongly express'd*. This is very common, especially in our *Pindarick* Writers: indeed most of our Poets have (a) falln into it some time or other; but in those, you find the most gross and insufferable Instances of it that can be imagin'd.

In these *Strings* of Metaphor, nothing in my Opinion is so faulty, as that Point which has been so often touch'd upon: the shifting of Circumstances in the same Description; and representing a Thing confusedly, sometimes in its *figurative*, and sometimes in its *proper* Appearance. While an Actor is upon the Stage, his own private Character must be wholly laid aside: he must be entirely *Booth*, or entirely *Cato*. Nay, even in the Scenary itself, things must be of a piece; and Mr. *Addison* has the justest Occasion for his frequent Severities upon this (b) contradictory Mixture's prevailing so monstrously in our Theatre: How would the Wits of King *Charles's* time have laugh'd

(a) See *Od.* 19, 286,—251. And 20. Verse 19, to Verse 30,—13, to 23.

(b) See *Spectator*, Numb. 5.

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to see *Nicolini* sailing in an open Boat, upon a Sea of Past-board? What a field of Raillery would they have been let into, had they been entertain'd with painted Dragons spitting Wildfire, enchanted Chariots drawn by *Flanders* Mares, and real *Cascades* in artificial Landskips? The making things after this manner, partly real, and partly imaginary, is to join Inconsistencies. Shadows ought never to be mixt with Realities in the same Piece, whether in poetick Scenary, or that of the Stage.

A Poet is never more apt to fall into this Confusion, than when he is speaking of Allegorical Persons; as, particularly, the Deities of the Heathens. When we speak of them personally, we are apt to mix something of their mystick Character: this is certainly vicious in Writing; and 'tis more so, to confuse the Properties of those things, over which any of those Deities were suppos'd to preside, with the Personal Acts of any particular Deity.

The Poets are allow'd the privilege of elevating every Subject they take into their management: if they please, they may represent the Sun, as guided by an Intelligence: and 'tis but one step farther with them, to give that guiding Intelligence, a Name; they call him *Phœbus*; and obviously enough, feign to themselves,

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selfes, that he drives round the World in a Chariot of Fire. By degrees the Allegory is form'd regularly, and enlarg'd with more Particulars: he has so many Horses assign'd to his Chariot: His own Appearance is well known: Beardless and Young; A Glory round his Head, and a Quiver full of Arrows o'er his Shoulder: *Thetis* is ready to receive him at the End of his Journey; and when he is to set out again, *Aurora* rises from the Ocean to open the *Gates of Heaven*, that are kept for him by the *Hours*.

How very regular can Fiction be upon Occasion? The Establishment of this Allegory under these Particulars, has prevented a world of Confusion: This we may see by any Allegory, which is not yet settled on so Uniform a Plan. To shew how far, I shall beg leave to enlarge a little on one of the same Nature, That of *Aurora*, the Goddess of the Morning.

Phœbus is never represented on this Occasion, but in his Chariot I was speaking of; as for *Aurora*, I know not whether she rides, sits, or walks: Sometimes she is in Heaven, and sometimes upon Earth: In short, the Poets seem to leave it undetermin'd how, when, or for what time she makes her Appearance. I have laid together several Passages relating to

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this, but they leave the Point as confus'd
as it was before:

Now did the rosy-finger'd Morn arise,
(a) And shed her sacred light along the skies:

There, she is plainly in Heaven.

—— When o'er the Eastern lawn
In saffron robes the daughter of the dawn
(b) Advanc'd her rosy steps——

And here as plainly upon Earth.

—— With her orient wheels
(c) *Aurora* flam'd above the Eastern hills.

Here I cannot absolutely determine,
whether she be in Heaven, or upon
Earth; but 'tis plain, she is got into her
Chariot now, as she was pleas'd to walk
the time before.

But when it is evident, that she is not
upon Earth, 'tis still difficult to know
whether she is near it, or in the higher
Heavens: whether she

—— Ascends the Court of *Jove*,
(d) Lifts up her light, and opens day above:

(a) *Od.* 13, 22,—18.

(b) *Od.* 4, 587,—431.

(c) *Od.* 16, 380,—368.

(d) *Il.* 2. 60,—49.

Or only

(a)——Heaves her orient head above the waves.

There is the same difference in the degrees of that Brightness, which is attributed to her appearance: sometimes she only (b) *blushes with new-born Day*, and sometimes she is encompass'd with (c) *the full splendor of it*: When I read one Description, I take it for granted, that the Glory round her Head should be of a (d) *glimmering Light*; but when we come to another, 'tis of a *strong* (e) *Flame*: You are at the same loss to know, whether her Robes are (f) *Rose-colour'd*, (f) *Saffron*, or (g) *Purple*: In fine, It would puzzle the Criticks to answer directly, whether she has a *Quiver* on her Shoulders; and whether she is to appear in a (b) *martial*, or in a gentle, peaceable Posture.

This unsettledness in the present Case, runs through almost all the Poets since

(a) *Il.* 19, 1.(b) *Il.* 11, 1.(c) *Il.* 8, 83, —66.(d) *Od.* 9, 515, —437.(e) *Od.* 16, 381, —368.(f) *Od.* 4, 587, —431.(g) *Od.* 19, 500, —428.(h) Compare *Od.* 19, 500, with 6, 58.

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Homer. The most correct that ever wrote are not entirely free from it. *Virgil* himself oftentimes (a) continues her Course so far, that his (b) Commentators, to salve the matter, say, we must understand *Phæbus* by *Aurora*. In him the very *Horses* that draw her Chariot, are (c) Rose-colour'd; as in *Theocritus* they are (d) *White*: sometimes she has the (e) *Horses* of *Phæbus*; sometimes (f) Four of her own; sometimes (g) Two; and sometimes she is forc'd to ride only, and that upon (h) the Wings of *Pegasus*.

It may be left to the Poets themselves to determine, whether this Management be just towards Persons of their own making: I shall only say, that the greatest Criticks have ever thought, that *Consistency* is requir'd in the most unbounded *Fictions*: And, if I mistake not greatly, *Homer* is more regular in this very Fiction before us. A Person better vers'd in his

(a) *Æn.* 6, 536, &c.

(b) Thus *Donatus*, *Ruans*, &c.

(c) *Æn.* 7, 26. and 6, 536.

(d) — Λεύκη πτερόεντα καὶ ἄλκιρα ἵπποι.
Idyl. 13.

(e) *Æn.* 5, 105.

(f) *Æn.* 6, 536.

(g) *Æn.* 7, 26.

(h) Κεχρυστοῖς ὑπὲρ ποταμοῦ Πηνειοῦ πλεοῖς.
Lycophron.

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Writings, than I have the Happiness to be, might, I believe, form from them as settled a Scheme in relation to this Goddess, as has been drawn up for any other of his Deities. This is certain, that he has precisely fixt the *time* of her appearance; 'tis that (a) Interval, which commences after the first Dawn of Light, and ends just before the actual Rising of the Sun. She always ascends (b) from the Sea, to the Eastern *extremity*, or (as it is in the Language of Poetry) the (c) *Gates of Heaven*: there she sits in her (d) Golden Chariot, which has two Horses assign'd to it, distinct (e) from those of *Phæbus*; and only waits to (f) prepare the way for the Chariot of that Deity.

The Dress, and the Epithets, which *Homer* gives to this Imaginary Being, are, as they ought to be in all such Allegories, *at the same time evidently* (g) *drawn from the Nature of the Thing, and fairly applicable to the Fictitious Person.*

(a) The Twilight is reckon'd into the Night. *Iliad* h, 433. And the first *direct* appearance of Rays attributed to the Sun; *ibid.* 422.

(b) *Il.* γ, 2.

(c) See Mr. Pope's Note on *Il.* γ, 928.

(d) *Od.* ι', 244.

(e) See Note on *Od.* ι', 260.

(f) Φῶς ἐρίσσει. *Il.* β', 49, &c.

(g) This *Eusebius* shews at large in his first Note on the second Book of the *Odyssey*: particularly, as to the Epithet ποσειδάωνος.

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So much for Allegory: 'Tis a dangerous Topick, and we are apt to be lost in the Clouds of it: Either the natural Description, or the Allegory by itself, may have a thousand Beauties; but when they are dash'd together, every thing is dark and confus'd. They put me in mind, *Philypsus*, of the two Liquors Sir *Isaac Newton* speaks of, which from a fine Azure, and a beautiful Red, if you mix them, produce no Colour at all: The transparency and glow, which each had separately, is immediately lost; and their Beauties vanish away into one thick impenetrable Shade.

Before these confus'd Allegories, and mixt Metaphors, I should have mention'd some other Instances, in which single Metaphors are faulty, either as they are Improper or Affected.

Is it proper to speak of *Penelope's Wit and Beauty* (or her Beauty alone) under the Notion of (a) *Drooping Verdure*? Is it proper to talk of (b) *Raining Kisses*? or of (c) *Storing a Vessel with prosperous Gales*?

Is not the Metaphor, and the Turn of Expression, somewhat affected, or over-

(a) *Od.* 19, 149—128.

(b) *Od.* 17, 49—39.

(c) *Od.* 5, 213; and 216—167.

wrought,

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wrought, in this Passage of the Nineteenth *Odyssey*?

These swarthy arms among the covert stores
Are seemlier hid; my thoughtless youth they blame,
(a) *Imbrow'n'd with vapour of the smouldring flame.*

And a little farther, in the same:

My woes awak'd will violate your Ear;
And, to this gay censorious train, appear
(b) *A winy vapour melting in a Tear.*

Again; upon *Telemachus's* return:

All crowded round the family appears,
With wild entrancement, and ecstatick tears.
Swift from above descends the Royal Fair;
Her beauteous cheeks *the blush of Venus* wear,
(c) *Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air.*

In the following Lines she hangs o'er him,

———In his embraces dies;
(e) *Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes.*

You have here (says *Antiphaus*) what has appear'd to me as Blemishes in this Poem, under these several Heads. I have endeavour'd, *Philypsus*, to read it with

(a) *Od.* 19, 22 — 18.

(b) *Od.* 19, 143 — 122.

(c) *Od.* 17, 49, — 38.

severity:

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severity: and when my Regards for the Author, or the Influence - which such Writers will always have over one's Soul, began at any time to sway my Mind; I have call'd up all the Ill-nature I am Master of to my Assistance; I'm fully sensible how difficult it is to keep the balance steady: sometimes our Admiration may warm us too much; and sometimes a little Malice will prevail. If any thing I have been saying seems discolour'd with this Temper of Mind, point out my Faults to me, dear *Philypsus*; correct me like a Friend; and shew that openness I have deserv'd at your hands.

When I have time to consider the Notes I see you have taken down, (answer'd *Philypsus*) and to compare some Passages with the Original, you shall know more of my Mind; as yet I see no reason for your Request; but think you have dealt with that Fairness which I so much admire in my *Antiphaus*.

In the mean time I have a word or two to add on those other Excellencies of this Translation, which I mention'd to you before.

That Method of Improving the Original, by *Transferring Beauties* from one fine Writer to another, is carried on thro' this remaining part of the Poem, in the same frequency, as it was us'd in the former Volumes.

These *Foreign Infusions* of Thought and Language (to use the Name which Mr. Addison has given them) are very discernible to any one of a tolerable Taste: 'tis true, they must have something of a new Air; but they still retain a distinct Resemblance of the Old, something like that of the Sister *Nereids* in Ovid;

*Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen; qualem decet esse sororum.*

In pointing out these Resemblances to some People, I shou'd be apprehensive, that they might think me taken up in an Imaginary Chace; but any one of much less Discernment than *Antiphaus*, will perceive immediately, that this Likeness is real, and design'd by the Poet himself. There is an (a) eminent Critick, who has wrote a whole Treatise on this single Point, in Praise of a (b) particular Favourite of his: In the present Case, Mr. Pope tells (c) us, "That he read the Ancients with this Design; that he serves himself of them as much as he can; and that they have been his chief Inspirers in Poetry." I believe the Gen-

(a) *Casaubon.*

(b) *Persius.*

(c) Preface to his Works, Fol. and Pref. to the Pastorals, p. 10.

clesmen, who are concern'd with him in this Translation, would give me leave to say the same of them: 'Tis too evident to be deny'd: it appears both in their (a) Observations, and in their excellent Works.

In these last Volumes, how finely are (b) some Thoughts wove into this Translation from the sacred Pages? from the *Iliad*, and *Aeneid*; from *Dryden*, and *Milton* among ourselves; and from several others, both Ancient and Moderns?

The Translator is sometimes as Artful in adding, of himself, some short Strokes to what *Homer* has said. We meet with several of these little Insertions, which are very just and improving. I shall mention but one. As Mr. *Addison* (c) proposes a Correction of *Paradise Lost*, by cutting off the two last Lines; Mr. *Pope* improves this Poem, by adding a Line in the Conclusion of it: This Insertion possibly is better chose, than that Alteration

(a) See Note on *Odyssey* 11. 152—18, 207.

(b) From *Ss. Book* 16, 227. *ibid.* 420. B. 18, 158. B. 19, 99, &c.

Virgil, B. 15, 250. B. 16, 189. B. 17, 227. —

Ibid. 523. B. 18, 121. B. 24, 131, &c. —

Homer, B. 17, 613. B. 24, 513. —

Milton, B. 19, 694. B. 20, 370. B. 24, 498, &c. —

Dryden, B. 23, 322. B. 24, 309. *ibid.* 632. —

(c) *Spectator*, Numb. 369.

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so modestly propos'd by Mr. *Addison*. The Reader, indeed, would willingly go off with some Hopes and Satisfaction, after the melancholy Scene in *Milton's* last Book: but it may be said that, considering the Moral and chief Delign of that Poem, Terror is the last Passion to be left upon the Mind of the Reader. On the contrary, the *Odyssey* ought on all Accounts to terminate *happily*: and Mr. *Pope's* Addition, in the close of it, is therefore an Improvement, because it forwards the Moral; it gives us a (a) fuller View and Confirmation of the *Happiness* of *Ulysses*, and leaves it upon a firmer Foundation.

In the beginning of the Evening, *Antiphauts*, you were speaking of the Poets *transposing Words* to Advantage. I believe

(a) So *Pallas* spoke: the mandate from above
The King obey'd. The Virgin-seed of *Jove*
In *Mentor's* form confirm'd the full accord,
And willing Nations knew their lawful Lord.

Homer himself does not end in so full and complete a manner: His last Line does not rest well; and *Chapman* seems resolv'd to shew the infirmness of it, as much as he could possibly in his Translation, which breaks off in these Lines,

'Twixt both parts the seed of *Jove*,
Athenian Pallas, of all future love
A League compos'd; and for her form, took choice
Of *Mentor's* likeness, both in limb, and voice.

this

this may sometimes be of greater Use in altering the Order of *Sentences*, or the Succession of some *Incidents* in the Poem; tho' I own, this must be attempted but rarely, and with the greatest Caution: Difficult as it is, you will find a good Instance of the Former in one of the Suitors ridiculing Speeches; and of the Latter in *Euryclea's* Transports.

Euryclea, you know, discovers *Ulysses* by a Scar upon his Leg, while she is Batheing him. The Moment she makes this discovery, she drops the Jar of Water, and is ready to faint away with Surprise and Joy. Tho' these, in the Nature of the Case, must follow immediately upon one another, *Homer* has inserted a long Story (how the Scar was occasion'd) *just after* the Discovery, and *before* those Passions, which are the immediate Effect of it. Thus is a sudden Event *declar'd* fourscore Lines before it is *describ'd*—A Succession of *time* taken up in the Narration, contrary to the time of the Fact—An *Impetuous* Passion kept in suspense; in a word, two things inseparable in their Nature, are disjointed in the Description. I know not whether I see this in a wrong Light; but at present it puts me in Mind of *Mahomet's* flinging his Basen down, travelling to Heaven, seeing the Lord knows what there,

there, and returning again before the Water is run out.

If I mistake not, this Impropriety is avoided very artfully. *Euryclea* is not made to discover this Scar before that long Digression. (a) It is rather said, (in the Prophetick manner of the Poets) that she would soon discover it, than that she has actually discover'd it. 'Tis after the Digression, that it is mention'd directly as Fact: so that in the Translation, This Fact is not disjointed from those Emotions which it immediately raises in *Euryclea*; we are not told four-score Lines after the Jar is flung down, that the Water is *running* out of it.

If this be really the Case, says *Antiphilus*, I think the Alteration is much to be commended. But why may not *Homer* himself be understood to speak in the Prophetick manner too? for I suppose that single Point would salve all; You do not blame the Digression itself?

No, says *Philypsus*, 'tis not the Digression which I blame, but the Point in which it is introduc'd; just between a Fact, and what in Nature must be immediately consequent upon that Fact. If, as you ask, *Homer* speaks at first, only in the Prophetick manner, then it is all

(a) *Od.* 19, 461. And 347—392, and 467.

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clear'd up: But I fear his Expressions confine it directly to a thing *then done*, and cannot be taken in the Prophetical way.

Phibysus was so engag'd to this Moment, that he had not once observ'd how the Day wore away: He was surpriz'd to find the Night was just coming on. "Why did you suffer me (says he to *Antiphaus*) to keep you here so long? I did not imagine the Night had been so near us: You know I am an Eternal Talker.—However I see the Coach is at the Door; and we may reach our Lodgings, I believe, before it is quite dark."





AN
ESSAY
ON
Mr. *Pope's* ODYSSEY.

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BEFORE they parted the last Evening, the two Friends agreed, that their next Meeting shou'd be in the same Place; and as this was to be the last which they intended to set apart for this Enquiry, they set out for *Horatio's* earlier than usual. When they alighted, *Philypsus* order'd his Servant before them to the *Dome of Apollo*, with a Book or two he had brought in the Coach; whilst he and *Antiphaus* walk'd on gently to enjoy the

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the Freshness of the Air, and the Beauties of the Place. The Sun, (which now began to be in its decline) as it shot thro' the Trees, made a thousand wavering Mixtures of Light and Shade : The Birds on all sides were answering one another in their little natural Airs; every thing look'd fresh about them, and every thing was agreeable.

Delighted with so many calm undisturb'd Pleasures, they wander'd on from one Walk to another, and chatted, as they went, of a Thousand indifferent Things. Among the rest *Philypsus* fell into an Account of the Company he had to dine with him. You know *Marforio*, says he. — Perfectly well, answer'd *Antiphaus*. — He was there too; and made it his Business, as usual, to contradict every thing that was offer'd against any of our celebrated Poets. — I am very glad, says *Antiphaus*, that I was not of the Company; his Way of arguing is too General to be Answer'd, and too Positive to be Borne with. — Yes, says *Philypsus*, it was his old way. If one of the Company blamed some particular *Littleness* in *Milton*, he would immediately ask him how he could blaspheme such a Sublime Poet? And when another mention'd a gross Line from *Addison's* Works; How absurd is that, says he, to charge such a thing on the
the

the chastest and most correct Compositions in the World? — Right! and I suppose the very next thing he must ask was, How you could dislike such Glorious Men as Addison and Milton. — You have him exactly. It was in vain to tell him that you disliked only *this Line*, or *that Thought*: He would have his way; and, I doubt not, but in his Opinion we are all a Set of Hereticks, or at least Free-thinkers in Poetry. What an egregious Fault is it, *Antiphaus*, with some Men, only to have one's Eyes open? — But there are times (says *Antiphaus*, assuming as he spoke, the imperious air and manner of *Marforio*) there are times sure, when they had better be shut. — And therefore I should wink always. — Not so neither: Your Betters may direct you what to look upon, and what not. — That's a good Thought, truly: 'tis great Pity the Legislature has not consider'd of it. I should be in Love with an Act of Parliament about the Use of Eyes. — Why where would be the great harm of the Matter, if you were ordered to wink hard, or turn away from every disagreeable Object that offer'd itself? — How may I behave, if the Object be agreeable? — Look as long as you please. — And how, if there be a Mixture of disagreeable in it? — You suppose then, that there may be something disagreeable in that which is beautiful? — Really,

Really, Sir, that is my Notion. Nay, I am apt to think farther, that there is nothing so Beautiful as to be without Defect, without some Mixture of the Disagreeable. By your Rule then, we must lose the sight of a thousand fine Objects. How can I look on that Lady you were admiring so much the other Day in the Ring, without seeing that her Hair is of a disagreeable Colour? Or must I swear that her Eyebrows are Black, because she has a fine Shape? — *That's over-straining the matter: but I think you might pass by such a Trifle, if it were only in Complaisance. Where there are such exact Features, so charming a Complexion, and a Make so delicate, 'tis barbarous not to let such a small Affair, as the Colour of an Eyebrow, escape your Observation.* — Depend upon it, I would not be so blind as to think the Lady was disagreeable on that Account. — *But I cannot allow any thing disagreeable about her.* — Where are your Eyes then? — *I would not believe them.* — That's one way. — Or what would you say to the new Invention? — What Invention, I beseech you? — *Only of a Set of Glasses, which shall make each favourite Object appear exactly the same to every Eye.* — And exactly beautiful? — *That too.* — An hopeful Project, truly! Let but Marforio be the Designer, and some things would

would appear all glaring and beautiful; while all the rest, I suppose, only upon turning the Tube, might be nothing but Deformity.

In the midst of this roving sort of Talk, they were got to the *Dome*, before they thought of it: "Well, says *Philypsus*, (as he enter'd) till I meet with the " Perspectives you were talking of, I " shall not be asham'd to confess, that I " find my Eyes at present to be of a different Turn. I cannot help perceiving " some little Blemishes in our most delightful Poets, and yet I am far from " an Insensible to their Beauty: I view " them with delight; I admire them " passionately: Nay, I believe, I have " all of *Marforio's* Love, except the Blindness of it. 'Tis there that you have " open'd my Eyes, *Antiphaus*: You have " taught me to love not only with Passion, but with Reason."— Rather say, (reply'd *Antiphaus*) that your own Mind asserted its true Prerogative, and rose up to guide your Passions to none but proper Objects. — However that be, says *Philypsus*, I am sensible of an Alteration for the better, and can now indulge a Passion for any Writer with the greater Appetite, as I am persuaded it gives the Mind a sufficient Pleasure, without making so great a Fool of it. Do I not love this

M

Writer?

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Writer? added he, (taking up one of the Pieces that lay before him) I read him with the same Eagerness, and find new Charms in him continually. Nay, I think my Love of him more secure, than ever: Since I can suffer myself to see his Faults; and by that means, am satisfied that they can never be sufficient in the least to cloud his Perfections.

I am entirely of your Opinion, (says *Antiphaus*) and doubt not, but in our finishing this Enquiry, we shall have the greater Security in admiring him. I only speak of ourselves. There may be many other Beauties, and other Faults, visible to Men of better Eyes: but we may safely fix our own Sentiments on what we have been able to discover ourselves. I hope, we have endeavour'd sincerely to hold the Balance steady; and when we have done what we can, we have done what we ought.

I wish you would have left that *Sentence* for me, says *Philypsus*; it would have serv'd admirably to introduce what I am to enter upon this Evening.—It is at your service, (says *Antiphaus*) and therefore I beg you would proceed.

Tho' I might begin very well with the *sententious manner* in Writing; my Subject, says *Philypsus*, is so various, that I do not well know what I ought to chuse first:

first: The Prospect widens rather too much upon me; and indeed takes in most of the Faults and Virtues of any Poem. I own that, in general, the Great and First Excellence of a *Poet*, is to be *natural*: but it will be allow'd me, that the chief and distinguishing Beauty of an *Epick* Poem, as such, is a true Air of *Greatness*, and a *Stile* that carries *weight* and *emphasis* with it: as the Vice most opposite to it, is *trifling*, *vulgarity*, and *meanness*. I wish I may manage these Points as fully, as I doubt not *Antiphaus* will display the *natural* strokes that are so frequent in the *Odysey*.

Sentences carry much efficacy with them in a Poem; they are usually of the preceptive kind; tho' they seem rather to insinuate, than to command: As they are general Truths and Maxims of Life, well adapted to some particular occasion in the Poem, they appear with Authority; and contain the most useful Instructions, without the Stiffness and Odium of personal Advice.

'Tis a Mistake (to use a Maxim of Lord Shaftesbury's) to think that no body knows how to take Advice; the Fault is, that few know how to give it. To do this agreeably, and at the same time with Weight, is the great Art of Sentences in Poetry.

Poetry, in its Birth, was calculated for the Service of Religion. The design of the *Epick* Muse was to paint the Successes of Virtue, or the Punishment of Vice. Hence the *Tragick*, that followed the very same Purposes; and afterward the old *Comedy*, whose business lay in encouraging lesser Domestick Virtues, and ridiculing the Foibles of Mankind. *Satire*, the Off-spring of both these, partakes of either kind; the Smiles in *Horace*, looks Severe in *Persius*, and Commanding in *Juvenal*. The Satirist may use different Methods, but whether he lashes or ridicules, 'tis still the vicious, who are to suffer.

All the other Species of Poetry either fall in with these, or follow the same Ends; such as forget this, deserve not the Name of Poets: they prostitute the Muse, and whatever they produce must be of a Bastard Kind.

Among many other Excellencies, this ought particularly to be observ'd in Honour of the true genuine Poets of Antiquity, that they seem to treat of Morality even better than those who profess'd that Study. Were it not for the Works of their Poets, we might very well imagine, *Benevolence*, for Instance, That which gives its Life and Spirit to the whole Family of Virtues, was suppress'd to the last

last Degree among the Heathens. In reading their Philosophers, one is almost persuaded that they teach Revenge, and make it their business to limit and restrain that Love which Men have naturally to one another. In short, he that wants to find the true Philosophy, must go to their Poets. They break out into warmer Notions, and more exalted Lessons of Humanity. Among them the Face of Charity is less veil'd and clouded, and Goodness appears with a Countenance more generous and erect

The *Odysssey*, as a *Moral Poem*, exceeds all the Writings of the Ancients: it is perpetual in forming the Manners, and instructing the Mind: it sets off the Duties of Life more fully, as well as more agreeably, than the *Academy* or *Lyceum*. *Horace*, who was so well acquainted with the Tenets of each of them, has given (a) *Homer's* Poems the Preference to both.

Surely, *Antiphaus*, Men were more virtuous in the days of *Homer*, than they were in the time of *Plato* or *Cicero*; at least, they were more charitable, and tender to Strangers. How else could the

(a) — Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non;
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo & Crantore dicit.

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Poet speak in such a Spirit of Goodness, whenever he touches upon this Duty? Nothing is inculcated by him more frequently, and nothing with greater Strength and Emphasis.

Homer (in relation to *Strangers*) does not stint the Charity of his Countrymen to the common *Use of Fire and Water*: he seems rather to proportion the *bounty* to the *want*;

'Tis ours the Sons of sorrow to relieve,
(a) Chear the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.

He scarce looks upon this as *bounty*, he rather thinks it a *debt* owing to every one of the same nature with us:

'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe:
(b) 'Tis what the Gods require.

What is given to them (says he) is paid to, and will infallibly be rewarded by, the Divine Power:

By *Jove* the Stranger and the Poor are sent;
(c) And what to *those* we give, to *Jove* is lent.

As the neglect of this will be aveng'd by the same:

(a) *Od.* 6, 245,—207.

(b) *Od.* 9, 321,—269.

(c) *Od.* 6, 247,—208.

To *Jove* their cause, and their revenge belongs,
 (a) He wanders with them, and he feels their
 [wrongs.

I doubt not, but this Notion of the Gods wandering on Earth in a disguised manner, was a very common motive to Charity in those times: it is mention'd very strongly in the Original, in this place; and (b) afterwards, when *Ulysses* appears as a Suppliant among the *Phaeacians*.

Such high exalted Thoughts of this Duty have carried the Poet so far as (c) to teach, "That we should not value any labour of our own in assisting others:" but as that is not deliver'd in the *Sententious manner*, I should go out of my way to repeat it at present.

To us, who have always enjoy'd so clear and steady a Light, in regard to every branch of this Duty, these sentences may appear common and obvious: but I imagine any one, who should compare these Passages, to the rules of Benevolence in the Philosophical writings of the Ancients; would upon such a view allow them to contain thoughts highly noble and extensive.

(a) *Od.* 9. 329.—271.

(b) *Od.* 7. 265.—199.

(c) See *Od.* 7. 256.—194.

I shall mention but one more, which, tho' it run thro' several lines, is but one entire sentence. It contains a beautiful Idea of Charity in a Heathen; and goes rather beyond the Heathen Principles.

Who calls, from distant nations to his own,
The poor, distinguish'd by their wants alone?
Round the whole world are sought those men di-

[vine,

Who publick Structures raise, or who design;
Those to whose Eyes the Gods their ways reveal,
Or blest with salutary arts to heal:

These states invite, and mighty Kings admire,
Wide as the Sun displays his vital fire.

It is not so with Want! How few that feed

(a) A Wretch unhappy, merely for his need?

I ought not to dissemble one thing;
That the Translation is not to be trusted
entirely in this Argument; we find these
Passages improv'd in the Handling; and
those Lines, in which they resemble our
sacred Writings, may be drawn more
strongly. However, the Original itself
may give us a great deal of reason to
suppose, either that *Homer* had borrowed
some lights from thence; or that he
could discern the Light of Nature more
clearly, than any other of the Heathen
Writers.

(a) *Od.* 17, 471,—387

Before I compar'd Passages, I must own to you, that I was in particular expectation of Improvements from Mr. *Pope* under this Article. A virtuous generous Soul is certainly as necessary to constitute a Great Poet, as a Great Orator: and in Sentiments like these, we may discover that temper of Mind, which I dare say has contributed much towards making that Gentleman so good a Poet, as well as so good a Friend.

There is one particular more, extremely frequent in *Homer*: it runs thorough all his Works; and is scarce once omitted, where there is any occasion for it. I believe your Thoughts outrun me, and might prevent my saying, that I mean His Reflections on the Miseries of this Life. They are mostly very emphatical; and lead to a very easy and useful inference.

—To his native land our charge resign'd; [hind:
Heav'n's is his life to come, and all the woes be-
Then must he suffer what the Fates ordain;
For Fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
(a) And Twins ev'n from the birth are Misery }
[and Man! }

In another place we have the same Thought as strongly express'd, though

(a) *Od.* 7, 264, — 198.

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Those to whose Eyes the Gods their ways reveal,
Or bless with salutary arts to heal:

These states invite, and mighty Kings admire,
Wide as the Sun displays his vital fire.

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(a) *Od.* 7, 264.—198.

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branch'd out into several other Particulars: Let us suppose *Ulysses* before us: A Prince, Great for the Ages in which he liv'd, and greatly distress'd: How much does he speak like one born to Wisdom, and long instructed by Adversity?

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling treads on earth,
Most vain is Man! calamitous by birth.
To day with pow'r elate in strength he blooms;
The haughty creature on that pow'r presumes:
Anon, from Heav'n, a sad reverse he feels;
Untaught to bear, 'gainst Heav'n the wretch rebels.
For Man is changeful, as his bliss or woe; [low.
Too high, when prosp'rous; when distress'd, too
There was a Day, when (with the scornful Great)
I swell'd in pomp, and arrogance of state;
Proud of the pow'r, that to high birth belongs;
And us'd that pow'r to justify my wrongs.
Then let not Man be proud; but firm of mind,
Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign'd:
(a) Be Dumb, when Heav'n afflicts!——

Of all *Sentences*, there are none which strike the Mind more forcibly, than those which carry a bold air, a certain nobleness of Thought with them. There is a *Moral Heroism*, greatly to be preferr'd to that which generally usurps its Name; a Generosity of Soul, that looks beyond the Vulgar, and speaks up to the Truth of things: It is this Generosity, which animates those Lines in *Virgil*:

(a) *Od.* 18, 171,—141.

Est hic, est animus, lucis contemptor; & istum
 (a) *Qui vita bene credat emi, quo tendis, honorem.*

The same Spirit is infus'd into this Line:

(b) Death, ill-exchang'd for bondage, and for pain!

The noblest Sentiments are not such as glitter, but such as are *solidly generous and good*. We have frequent instances of both from two Persons in the *Iliad*. *Hector* speaks things, that are great; *Ajax* often, what is *marvellous and surprizing*: Both speak loftily: but one is more solid, and the other nearer to a Rant; both shew Courage and Generosity in what they say; but they seem to *talk*, as they *act*: *Ajax* fights merely for fighting sake; while *Hector* engages always for the good of his Country.

I shall beg leave to close this Head with two Sentiments, as much celebrated as any in the *Iliad*, and spoke by the two Heroes we have been talking of. The one, in the mere Spirit of an Hero;

If Greece must perish, we thy will obey,
 (c) But let us perish in the face of day.

(a) *Æn.* 9, 206.

(b) *Od.* 17, 523—441.

(c) See Note on *Il.* 17, 731,—647.

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The other, in that of a Patriot, as well as an Hero:

Without a sign his sword the brave man draws;

(a) And asks no omen, but his country's cause.

I am sorry, says *Antiphaus*, you have quitted this Point so soon; methinks you might afford a little more room for a thing of such considerable Use. *Sentences* are fitted by their Nature to carry on that chief design of Poetry, to mix the *Useful* with the *Agreeable*.—Together with a certain air of Authority, they serve to establish the Poet's Moral Character; which, according to a (b) late Hypothesis, may render him at the same time more *delightful*, as well as more *instructive*.—Besides this, they often flatter the Vanity of the Reader; and (as the (c) First of Criticks tells us) “take the more readily with this or that Person, as they confirm in general, what he has before concluded from his own Observation on particular Occurrences in Life.”

I wonder at one thing, says *Philypsus*, That so many of the Criticks should blame Sentences, and look upon them as particularly unfit for Poems of the *Epick*

(a) *Il.* 12, 284.—243.

(b) *Origin* of our Ideas of *Beauty* and *Virtue*.

(c) See *Arist. Rhet.* Lib. 2. Cap. 21.

Kind:

Kind: (a) *Rapin*, I think, condemns them, as they seem to jut out of the Structure of the Poem, and are apt to interrupt the Narration too much: *Bossu*, who is rather on their side, yet observes there is a kind of *Calm Wisdom* in them, that is contrary to the *Passions*. Even the Person, whom you just now call'd the *First of Criticks*, puts us in mind of your *Rusticks*, that are always (b) stringing of Proverbs together: and a very good Critick of our own says, in so many words, that (c) *they are generally some of the heaviest pices in a whole Poem*.

Let them add, if they please, says *Antiphauts*, that they sound aukwardly from the mouth of a *Young Person*, and preposterously from an *Atheist*. I own the charge: the best Writers themselves seem to be sensible of it; and where they do any thing of this kind, are the first to correct themselves. *Addison* (d) puts a Sentence into the Mouth of *Portius*; but he corrects him for it, in the next Line, tho' the Son of a *Cato*; and when *Virgil*

(a) See Note on *Od.* 7. 379.

(b) *Arist. Rhet.* Lib. 2. Cap. 21.

(c) *Addison's Misc.* Vol. 1. p. 237. 12°.

(d) *Port.* 'Tis not in mortals to command success
But we'll do more, *Sempronius*; We'll deserve it.

Semp. Curse on the stripling! how he apes his Sire!
Ambitiously sententious. — *Cato.* Act. 1. Sc. 2.

(a) makes

(a) makes his Atheist sententious, there is still a mixture of the Atheist to be discover'd in what he says.

But grant that Sentences are not proper from Persons that are Young, or Vicious; grant, that they are not proper in a *Mezentius*, or a *Portius*: What then? may they not be proper in *Cato* himself, or in *Aeneas*?

'Tis the same Case in every particular you have produc'd from the Criticks: they speak rather against the Abuse of this Ornament, than against the Ornament itself. There can be no doubt of it; *Sentences* are certainly faulty, when they appear too grossly, and stand off from the rest of the Work: But what is this to Sentences, which are fitly applied, and wove in artfully with the other Parts? *Homer* and *Virgil* are very happy in this particular: they give them a sufficient Fulness; but they seldom glare so, as to attract the Eye singly to themselves: You admire them as much from their Relation to the things about them, as for their own particular Beauty: in short, they might be Beautiful by themselves, but they are much more so by their fitness to the places and occasions on

(a) *Æn.* 10, 860.

which they are us'd by those great Masters of Poetry.

We may add to this, that their Sentences are so far from hindering the Narration, that they are almost constantly a part of it, and help to carry it forward: But tho' they are usually wrought into the Speeches of the Poem, we do not receive them from Persons improper, or hurried by any violent Passion: and where the Subject is still and gentle, that *calm Wisdom*, that has been objected to them, cannot be very prejudicial. Indeed in any place, or on any Occasion, a long thread of them is insupportable; these are worse than the *Sanchoisms* of *Cervantes*, because they are not so ridiculous: We can laugh at *Sancho* all the time he is multiplying his Proverbs upon us; but in Poetry, such dry Preachments are, of all other, the greatest Opiates, and have the quickest effect on the Audience. *Lucan's* Poem, and *Seneca's* Tragedies, are, I fear, Instances of this to a great degree.

There is another way of murdering Sentences, for which we are wholly oblig'd to those ingenious Gentlemen, the *Editors*. It is that Art of cutting off Sentences from the Body of a Work, and forcing them to *jut out* from it, whether they will or no, by Printing all such, where-ever they can catch them, in *Ita-*
lick

lick Characters. Mr. Addison, if I remember, is condemning this Practice in that very place where he says, that *Sentences are some of the heaviest Pieces* in a Poem: and I imagine nothing could make him speak so severely of them in general, but this Practice, that is so destructive of their Beauty.

In short, Sentences that are cold, affected, or ill-placed, such as are either too distinct, or too much throng'd, may be blam'd with a great deal of Justice: but such as are handsomely wove into the Narration, at proper Intervals, and from none but proper Speakers, will not only be safe from the Censure of the Criticks; but are allowed by them in general, to be highly serviceable towards giving its proper Weight and Emphasis to an *Epick Poem*.

I think you have defended this Beauty sufficiently, says *Philypsus*; and shall go on to the next under this Head, *Conciseness*. There is no greater Symptom of weakness in a Writer, than his being apt to say *a little in a great deal*; as nothing is more strong and emphatical, than to say *a great deal in a little*.

Hence the Force and Emphasis of this Line of Mr. Pope.

(a) Oh ev'ry sacred Name in-one, my Friend!

And of this,

(b) The Great, the Good: your Father and your [King.

The want of a scrupulous Connexion,
draws things into a lesser Compass; and
adds the greater Spirit and Emotion:

(c) He shrieks, he reels, he falls.—

The more Rays are thus collected into
a Point, the more vigorous the Flame:
Hence there is yet greater *Emphasis*,
when the Rout of an Army is shewn in
the same contracted manner; as that in
the 24th of the (d) *Odyssey*: which has
some resemblance to *Sallust's* Description
of the same thing (agreeable to his usual
Conciseness) in these four Words only:

(e) *Sequi, fugere, occidi, capi.*

There may be a contraction of many
Circumstances to a Point, which turns
more on the *Sentiment*, than the *Diction*:
as when we place the Success of a Thou-
sand important Events on one Effort, or
one Moment of Time: Thus *Antinous*,

(a) *Od.* 22, 226.—308.

(b) *Od.* 2, 54.—47.

(c) *Od.* 18, 443.—397.

(d) *V.* 610.

(e) *Bel. Jug.* p. 106. Ed. *Martaire*.

the Chief of the Suitors, to his Companions,

(a) Arise, (or you for ever fall) arise.

Which has such an Air of *Milton's Lucifer*:

Awake, arise, or be for ever falln!

Those Lines, says *Antiphaus*, serve the purpose for which you repeat them very well; but is there not something too much like a *Turn* upon the words of them? I was sensible of that, (answer'd *Philypsus*) but I follow your Example, *Antiphaus*, in viewing a thing only in one Light at a time, to prevent the infinite Confusion that would happen in turning each Line every way. This is brought as Emphatical; You allow it to be so; if it answers the end for which it is produced, that is all that I intend: and I beg once for all to be understood under this view in every Instance that I have, or may use, on particular Occasions.

This masculine nervous Conciseness, I am speaking of, is very usual from Generals to their Soldiers: but among a multitude of Instances, I am particularly pleas'd with that Speech of *Henry*

(a) *Od.* 24. 499. — 436.

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the *Great*, before the Battle in the Plains of *Ivry*, "*I am your King, You are French-men, and there are the Enemy.*"

Sometimes we find an Emphasis and Vigour impress'd on every particular word of a Sentence:

(a) *Now, Grief, thou all art mine!*

And in these Lines, which we have often admir'd for their peculiar Strength and Efficacy: They speak of *Ulysses's* extreme Love of his native Country:

To see the *smoak* from his lov'd palace rise,
While the dear Isle in *distant* prospect lies,
(b) With what *contentment* would he close his
[eyes?]

This is not only of use in the Grand or Patherick: there are excellent Instances of it from *Terence* (c), in the Tender and Familiar, as there are others from *Virgil* in the Natural, and even in the Satirical; and that so strongly in the latter, that (d) some have been apt to imagine

(a) *Od.* 18, 299.—255.

(b) *Od.* 1. 77.—59.

(c) *Hæc verba meherecule una falsa lachrumula,*
Quam, oculos terendo misere, vix vi expresserit,
Resinguet.—*Eun.* Act. 1. Sc. 1.

(d) Thus *Dryden*; from his

Non tu in *trivis, indocte, solebas*
Stridenti miserum stipula disperdere carmen. *Ecl.* 3, 27.

As others from this Line:

Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi. *ib.* 90.
from

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from them, that *Virgil* might, if he pleas'd, have made the greatest *Satirist* that ever wrote.

Sometimes this very Emphasis is increas'd by a certain *Opposition* of the words us'd in it: there is a Passage in the *Iliad*, which I have particularly admir'd on this Account: Give me leave to repeat it from the Original; because the *Greek* Tongue is particularly Emphatical, and has more Nerves than perhaps our Language is capable of:

Οὐ γὰρ πῶ ἴδομεν, ἔδ' ἔκλυον ἀνδρήσαντες,
Ἄνδρ' ἕνα τουάδε μέγερ' ἐν ἡματι μπῖσαντος,
(a) Ὅα' ἔχτωρ ἔρρεξε —————

The Emphatical manner in writing flies all Dress and Ornament, all superfluous and descriptive Epithets, all turns and elegancies of Thought. Hence that Conciseness, which generally attends it. The most obvious fault in Conciseness is Obscurity; what is obscure, can never be sufficiently emphatical: This makes the concise way the most difficult of any. 'Tis easy to follow the Stream of one's Imagination, and write on with an unthinking Rapidity; but to express every

(a) *Il.* κ', 48. The *Opposition* is carried on further in the next Lines, between ἐν ἡματι, and Διήθ' τε καὶ δαίχον.

thing fully, and to say nothing that is needless, requires a great Judgment, and much force in our Expressions. The great *Monseigneur Pascal* had a particular happiness of comprizing *much* in a few Words: he had a very Mathematical Turn of Thought; and of all things hated an idle Prolixity. You will be pleas'd with an Excuse of his in a certain Case, where he had been guilty of it: 'Tis in the close of one of his Letters, where he begs his Friend to pardon the unusual length of it, by saying, *That he really had not time to make it shorter.*

Some emphatical Passages are not only so concise, as to contain just as many Ideas as Words; they have often force enough even to intimate several Ideas more than they express.

Thus it is in all Intimations of Power. One of *Homer's* greatest Excellencies lies in this. In setting off the Hero of his *Iliad*, he does not say in Words, that he was vastly Terrible to the Enemy; he mentions the effects, and leaves the Reader to collect what Terror must attend him. After the Death of *Patroclus*, the whole Army of the *Trojans* is put into Confusion, only (a) at hearing his Voice: They are all trembling, and dispirited:

(a) *Il.* 6', 224.

(a) *they*

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(a) *they had seen Achilles.* 'Tis not a sudden Panick; it continues upon them: When they pour'd down in such Numbers from the City, it was because (b) *they did not behold the Crest of that Hero;* and now they are all consulting, whether they should not quit the Field, because (c) *he had shewn himself at a distance, and might possibly enter into the next Engagement.*

Homer has the same address in intimating the Power of his Deities; when he introduces them as affecting their designs with a (d) *Touch*, with a (e) *Voice*, with a (f) *single Thought*.

It is the same Sentiment that gives their Air of Grandeur to these Lines:

(g) *Declare thy purpose; for thy Will is Fate. Let all be Peace.*—He said, and gave the nod
(b) *That binds the Fates, the Sanction of the God.*

And this, of the same import, from our *Shakespear*;

—What he bids be done,
Is *finis'd* with his bidding.—

-
- (a) *Il. σ', 248.*
 - (b) *ib. π', 70.*
 - (c) *—σ', 262.*
 - (d) *Il. ν', 60, 75.*
 - (e) *ib. ξ', 150.*
 - (f) *ib. ο', 242.*
 - (g) *Od. 24, 547—475.*
 - (h) *Od. 24, 561—485.*

On this turns the Greatness of that Thought in the Sacred History of the Creation: *God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light.* Tho' I should imagine this to exceed every Instance above; because it *intimates* all that they *express*, and intimates it as *fully* and *strongly*, as they *express* it.

Let the Greatness of this Sentence stand or fall by the Rules of Sublimity. We need not mention, that (a) *Longinus* chose it for an Instance of the *Sublime*: whether that great Critick ever saw it or not, is not material: but I wonder, that some later Writers, of very great Name, cannot be persuaded to see any Force or Energy in it. I own, I have never read what *Monsieur Le Clerc* offers against the Sublimity of this Passage: Surely it would not be very difficult to answer it, if it be of a Strain with what (b) *Monsieur Huet* offer'd before him; where he seems to argue, that (c) *This Passage cannot be Sublime, because the Language is Simple.*

It is this Art of leaving more for the Reader to collect, than you express in Words, which runs through several of

(a) Cap. 9. Ed. Oxon. 1718.

(b) See Preface to *Boileau's* Works.

(c) See *Huetii Dem. Ev. Prop. 4. Sect. 53.*

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Ulysses's Speeches, both at the Court of *Alcinous*, and before the *Suitors*. Whether the Hero tells his own Story, or feigns some other, he is equally careful in laying before them something of the high Station he once enjoy'd: and hence his Speeches have generally a great Air of that celebrated Answer of *Marius* to a Message sent from the *Roman General*:
(a) *Go, and tell Sextilius, that you saw Marius, sitting among the Ruins of Carthage.*

Intimation is so strong and nervous, that the (b) Ancient Criticks confin'd the Name of *Emphasis* to this one Point; tho' (as we use the word) the very contrary of this may be of great Service in making a Discourse *emphatical*. The Soul is sometimes possess'd by the *Number* of great Circumstances. Thus in that Passage of *Homer*, which Mr. *Pope* translates after the following manner:

[ground;
Men, Steeds, and Chariots shake the trembling
The Tumult thickens, and the Skies resound:
Victors and Vanquish'd join promiscuous cries,
(c) Triumphant shouts, and dying groans arise.

(a) *Plutarch's Life of Marius.*

(b) See *Quintil. Instit. Lib. 8. Cap. 3. and Lib. 9. Cap. 2.*

(c) *Il. 8. 80. — 65.*

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We meet with the same *tumultuary Figure* in the Description of the Field after the Battle:

[of Slain.

(a) Thro' Dust, thro' Blood, o'er Arms, and hills

This Passage (we are told) is imitated by *Xenophon*; and I am sure the Historian has not weaken'd it, by drawing it into a greater length, and expressing the Circumstances more fully: Allow me the Satisfaction of reading it to you. (b) *When the Battle was over, one might behold thro' the whole extent of the Field, the Ground dy'd red with Blood, the Bodies of Friends and Enemies, stretch'd over each other, the Shields pierc'd, the Spears broken, and the drawn Swords, some scatter'd on the Earth, some plung'd in the Bodies of the Slain, and some yet grasp'd in the Hands of the Soldiers.*

Now we have said upon an Historian, give me leave to observe one thing; That, both with Poets and in History, (c) *There may be some Fraud, in saying only the bare Truth.* In either, 'tis not sufficient to tell us, that *such a City*, for Instance, *was taken and ravag'd with a great deal of Inhumanity.* There is a *Poetical Falsity*, if a strong Idea of each particular

(a) *Il.* 10, 356,—298.

(b) Note on *Il.* 10, 356.

(c) *Minus est totum dicere, quàm omnia.*

be not imprinted on the Mind; and an *Historical*, if some things are pass'd over only with a general mark of Infamy or Dislike. It was in (a) *Quintilian* I first met with this Observation; and I wish our Historians, of all Parties, did not give us so many Examples of it, as we find every-where in their Works.

'Tis the same in Poetry: when all the *Circumstances* are laid out in their proper Colours, and make a complete Piece; its Images strike us with greater Energy, than when the *Whole* of the thing is only mention'd in general. Thus the *diffused Style* has its Propriety under this Head; and makes a larger and more continued Impression: as the force of its contrary Excellence, a just and emphatical *Conciseness*, may be more collected, and pierce the deeper. I do not mean when we mention a thing, but when we *show* it in a few words. There are just Miniatures of Great Objects in Poetry, as well as in Statuary or Painting. A *Hercules* (b) in little, may have all the Nerves of a *Colossus*: and even that prodigious Design of (c) *Dinarchus* might not have been more

(a) *Instit.* Lib. 8. Cap. 3.

(b) See *Statius*, *Sylv.* lib. 4. 6. 37.

(c) To form Mount *Athos* into a Statue of *Alexander the Great*; so design'd, as to hold a City in one hand, and to have a River run thorough the other.

Gigantick, than *Timantbes's* (a) *Polyphe-*
mus. Noble Images, whether in a larger
 or smaller Compass, strike the Mind very
 strongly. Either must be according to
 the Occasion. Things sometimes demand
 to be drawn at full length; and the Soul
 requires to expatiate over them: Some-
 times they chuse a more contracted Space:
 But though they lose from their Size,
 they lose nothing of their Spirit. It fills
 us with a noble and enlarg'd Pleasure,
 to consider the Heavenly Bodies, their
 Courses, and their immense Distances: at
 the same time, we are struck with a very
 particular Admiration, when we view
 their Situation and Motions in the Or-
 very.

Any uncommon extensive Image causes
 an Enlargement of our Ideas, and pos-
 sesses the Mind more completely: In
 such Cases 'tis observable, that even the
 Turn of the Verse may assist these Images.
 I may seem too particular, if I say, that
large Words, and *Lines* which consist
 chiefly of *long Syllables*, may be of use
 to extend our Thoughts in conceiving
 any *Gigantick* form: and yet perhaps
 both will be found not unserviceable in
 Mr. Pope's Description of his *Cyclops*.

(a) His Picture of that Giant in Miniature.

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A Giant-Shepherd here his flock maintains;
Far from the rest he solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
(a) A Form enormous! —

Or, where we see him

[Rock.

(b) Stretch'd forth in length, o'er half the cavern'd

Or when

He sends a dreadful groan; the rocks around,
(c) Thro' all their inmost, winding caves resound.

Whether you think this length and
heaviness of the Syllables necessary in the
present case, or not; I am sure, you will
allow it to be so in Melancholy Images.

In those deep solitudes, and awful cells,
Where *heav'nly-pensive Contemplation* dwells,
And *ever-musing Melancholy* reigns;

as Mr. Pope begins his *Eloisa to Abelard*;
and there are several Instances of the
same kind afterwards, in the same Poem.

Homer, in describing a large Object,
makes use of a word, which of itself is
(d) above half a Verse: and *Ovid*, on a

(a) *Od.* 9, 217.

(b) *Ibid.* 354.

(c) *Ibid.* 469.

(d) *Il.* 6, 676.

like occasion, joins several together of an unusual length. We behold his *Ægeon* bestriding his Whale, even in the Turn (a) of the Words which are to describe him.

Delay and Repetition are sometimes proper for the same Reasons; there is a Delay almost in every Syllable, where Mr. Pope intimates the vast size of a Stone, as well as the difficulty in heaving it up;

Then heav'd the Goddess in her mighty hand
A stone, the limit of the neighb'ring land,
(b) There fixt from eldest times; black, craggy,
[vast.

Virgil adds a Repetition in his Imitation of this very Passage in *Homer*: *Saxum circumspicit ingens, Saxum antiquum, ingens* — And Mr. Pope commends the Beauty of this Repetition, as (c) it makes us dwell upon the Image, and gives us leisure to consider the Vastness of it.

It may seem strange, that the Vastness, the mere Bulk of an Object, should possess the Mind in the manner I have been speaking of: but tho' there is no real Excellence in Largeness, 'tis certain that

(a) ——— *Balaenarumque prement in Ægeona suis immania terga lacertis. Met. 2, 10.*

(b) *Il. 21, 470* ——— *404.*

(c) See Note *ibid.*

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we are apt to apprehend it as excellent. This puts me in mind of a Point, that always strikes me very much in Poetry; A sort of *Comprehension*, as I should chuse to call it, for want of some better Name. 'Tis when any Great View is completely contracted into a few Lines; but to come up perfectly to my Notion, it should be such a View as is sufficient to fill the whole Mind: We are, in a manner, surrounded with it on all sides; and which ever way we turn our Eyes, we cannot look out of it. This is the Case, where *Ulysses* is represented in his Shipwreck on the Coast of *Phæacia*;

Above, sharp Rocks forbid access; *around*,
(a) Roar the wild Waves; *beneath*, is Sea profound!

If you can fancy yourself in the Place of *Ulysses*, at that juncture, you will apprehend what I mean the more fully. You can then see nothing, but what is painted out in this Couplet.

I apprehend you, (says *Antiphaus*) and indeed have observ'd this Beauty often in Reading. There is a Thought, (if I mistake not) repeated twice in the Eleventh *Odyssey*, of this kind:

(a) Above, below, on Earth, and in the Sky.

(a) *Od.* 5, 529—413.

(b) *Od.* 11, 139 and 373.

I know not whether the Image be total, but it cannot want much of it, in that Description of a shipwreckt Person, just before the Lines you repeated:

Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
Of murm'ring surges breaking on the shore;
Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To shield the vessel from the rolling sea;
But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight,
(a) All rough with rocks, with foamy billows
[white.

If this be not Total, at least it will engross Two of your Senses, whilst you keep in the same Posture; but those, as you say, seem the most complete, which take up the Eye what ever way you turn.
—As this (resum'd *Philippus*) to keep to the same Element:

(b) And all above was sky, and ocean all around.

These Total Views are much more vigorous and affecting, when the Objects are not inanimate: or at least, when some more moving Considerations are annex to them. Thus in the Picture of a rough Sea, terminating in craggy Shores, and Rocks, and a tempestuous Sky, every Object has an additional Terror from our seeing *Ulysses* painted in the

(a) *Od.* 5, 521.

(b) *Od.* 12, 474.

midst of these Dangers, and struggling to make so difficult a Shore.—I remember a Passage of this kind in a Writer of a very strong Imagination, which is heighten'd by the same Method. We have it in a Description of Mount *Atlas*, tho' I believe the Author took his Ideas from the *Alps*: 'tis deliver'd in this bold Poetical kind of Prose: (a) "See, with what
 "trembling steps poor Mankind tread the
 "narrow Brink of the deep Precipices! from
 "whence with giddy Horror they look down,
 "mistrusting even the Ground which bears
 "them; whilst they hear the hollow sound
 "of Torrents underneath, and see the Ruin
 "of the impending Rock, with falling
 "Trees, which hang with their Roots upwards, and seem to draw more Ruin after
 "them."

In these Cases, our Passions, as well as our Senses, are engag'd: and I take such Views to be then entirely complete, when all our Passions, as well as all our Senses, may be engross'd by them. Were I to give an Instance of such a View, I should prefer that Passage in *Virgil*, where he places you in the midst of a City, cover'd with the dismal shades of Night, taken and fir'd in a Thousand places by

the Enemy, and every-where fill'd with
Ruin, Terror, and Confusion:

(a) *Crudelis ubique
Luctus, ubique Pavor, & plurima mortis imago.*

I have dwelt the longer on these *Com-
prehensive Views*, as they fill and delight
the Mind very strongly. There is ano-
ther Case, much of this Nature, and of
particular Energy: I do not mean, when
we *surround*, but when we carry the
Mind out to a vast *extent*: As in this
Sentiment;

(b) By Heav'n above, by Hell beneath.

There is a Thought of this Nature,
very justly reckon'd among the Sublime,
which appears with a perfect Uniformi-
ty in (c) *Virgil*, in *Homer*, and in the
Book of Wisdom, formerly ascrib'd to So-
lomon. For my part, I do not at all
wonder at this exact Resemblance in
them. It is such a Thought, that when
it is once set before one, it possesses the
Mind so strongly, that it will leave its

(a) *Æn.* 2, 369.

(b) *Od.* 23, 369.

(c) *Ingrrediturque sola & caput inter nubila condit.*

Æn. 4, 177.

Οὐρανῷ ἐς ἡέλιον καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὰ βαίνει. *Id.* 5.
Καὶ ἑστῆς μὲν ἡπείρω, βεβήκει δ' ἐπὶ γῆς.

Lxx. per Græc. Σοφ. Σολ. *in.* 16.

Image behind it: And indeed 'tis observable, that a great Critick, where he would applaud it in *Homer*, (a) repeats it himself in the very turn of his own Criticism. *Longinus* is the Person I mean: who in a thousand Instances, as well as this,

(b) — Is himself the great Sublime he draws.

One of the most common Topicks for this among the Poets, is in speaking of the distance of *Tartarus*. *Homer* makes it as far from Hell to Earth downwards, as it is upwards from Earth to Heaven: It has been (c) observ'd, that Two of the best Poets since have enlarg'd it gradually, *Virgil* to Twice, and *Milton* to Thrice that Depth: but, if I mistake not, *Hesiod* of old has carried the Mind further than either of them: It would please you to see, how exact he is in his Measures: (d) "An Anvil (says he) will be
" Nine days complete in falling from
" Heaven to our Earth; and as many in
" falling from our Earth to *Tartarus*."

— This is the Distance from us to the

(a) Τὸ ἐν ἑαυτῷ γὰρ τὸν ἰσχυρὸν. De Subl. 8.
Edit. Oxon.

(b) Essay on Criticism.

(c) Note on ll. 8, 16.

(d) Oroy. ver. 722.

Gates of *Tartarus* only: he afterwards carries the Mind much farther, in this Description:

There lie the Treasures of the stormy Deep,
Of Earth, and Water, and extended Darkness.
A dreadful Chasm! squalid, and uninform'd,
And hateful ev'n to Gods. Whoe'er, within
The dreadful Op'ning of its Gates, should plunge
Prone thro' the great abyss; twelve times the course
Of the pale Moon, should feel its Storm and Tempest
In dire Descent; still hurry'd on precipitate,
Amidst the various Tumult and Confusion
Of disagreeing Natures. Oft the Pow'rs
Immortal cast their Eyes upon these regions,
(a) And shudder at the Sight. —

This Imagination seems to be imitated in *Milton*, where *Satan* meets with that violent shock, in travelling thro' *Chaos*; but the Fall here strikes us more, because it has no Bounds: It is still continuing lower and lower; and the Mind, in endeavouring to conceive it, is lost in its desired Infinitude.

When our Bodies are all so straiten'd and confin'd, what must the Soul be made of, *Antiphaus*? and what might be its Powers, if unrestrain'd? Since even in such dull Company as the Body, with all these Weights and Incumberments about

(a) *Hesiod's Oeog.* 744:

it, it betrays on every the smallest Occasion such an Appetite to Infinity?

Mr. *Addison*, in one of his finest Works, the Essay on the Pleasures of the Imagination, reckons *Greatness* as first among those things, which give that (a) Pleasure: " Nothing (says he) (b) gratifies the Mind " so much, as those large growing Ideas, " which lead her on almost to an Infinitude. (c) Our Imagination loves to be " filled with an Object, or to grasp at " any thing that is too big for its Capacity: We are flung into a pleasing " Astonishment at such unbounded Views, " and feel a delightful Stillness and " Amazement in the Soul, at the Apprehensions of them."

Every one may know this Pleasure by Experience: 'Tis not a dry Maxim laid down by the Philosophers: Whoever will consult his own Mind, when he looks only on a Prospect, may say as much as Mr. *Addison*, or Mr. *Locke* has said on this Occasion. When I had the Pleasure of conversing with the Gentleman who design'd these Gardens, (as indeed the finest in the Nation owe their Beauty to his Directions) I was very much pleas'd with

(a) *Spectator*, Numb. 412.

(b) Numb. 420.

(c) Numb. 412.

a Maxim which he then mention'd;
 " That as the greatest *fault* in a Prospect
 " was Confinement; so the *meanest* thing
 " too in a Design, was to have the
 " Bounds and Restraint of it immediate-
 " ly visible."

There may be several other Points to be consider'd under the Character of Emphatical, whether from the *Strength* of the Language, the *Nobleness* of the Sentiment, or the *Greatness* and *Extent* of the Object itself: but I am only giving a few Sketches of the Kind: You will give me leave, in the same manner, to take a short View of its Contrary, the *Low* or *Mean Style*.

It has been said, That (a) *Lowness* has just as many Causes, as *Elevation*; since whatever raises the Sentiment or Diction has its Opposite, which is *Mean*. This has the Appearance of Truth; but if one general Measure must be given, I should think that it is an Excess either way, which causes Meanness. Things over-wrought, as well as things under-wrought, will be *Mean*.

When the least Object is express'd in just and proper Terms, it will not of

(a) Eadem fere est ratio minuendi: Nam totidem sunt descendentibus; quot ascenduntibus gradus. *Quintil. Instit. Lib. 8. Cap. 4.*

itself come under the Character of Meanness: Nay, small things may be manag'd so as to change their Nature, and to compose the *Grand Air*. We meet with Dissertations on the late Discoveries in the lesser World of Animals, which have something Great and Sublime in them. Littleness itself may be assistant too in amplifying a Subject. *Homer* uses it thus in his Character of *Tydeus*; and 'tis visible to any one, That bold Martial Achievements look greater in a *NASSAU*, than they would in a *Maximin*.

Such Considerations as these have induc'd me to imagine, That all Meanness arises from some *Disproportion* or other. When a Person is represented in a View beneath himself, or any Action of Force is express'd weakly, the Expressions fall short of the Nature of the Thing: Again, that Meanness, which arises from the Language, may have the same Measure. The Close of a Sentence may fall beneath the Expectance rais'd in the Beginning of it, and then will necessarily have a mean Air. Some sorts of Poetry are of a nobler kind; and Descriptions of things, that would not be mean in a *Sonnet* or *Satire*, may become so in *Epick*. In general, all vulgar Terms, and all very disagreeable Descriptions, are beneath the Heroick Stile: as all Triflings, or
any

any Affectation of Ornament, argue something beneath the Care of a Poet, who has taken upon him to rule the nobler Passions, and to sing of Heroes, and of Gods.

When any thing has an Epithet higher, than its own Nature and the Occasion requires; or lower, than the proper Idea of the thing might very well demand; 'tis much the same; in both there will be a Disproportion, and a Meanness. Thus,

Be mindful of yourselves, draw forth your Swords,
(a) And to your Shafts obtend these ample boards.

And this Line,
(b) His Shoulder-blade receiv'd th' *ungentle* shock.

The same Critick, who observes on a certain Writer, for saying, That some Persons who were shipwreckt met with an *Unpleasant Death*; is equally severe on those, who carry things too far; he ranks any vain (c) *Elevations*, and the *Puerile Stile*, under one and the same Head.

Indeed both are frigid, and both are mean. A little or pretty Thought dress'd

(a) *Od.* 22, 88. — 75.

(b) *Od.* 17, 549 — 461.

(c) *Longinus*, Cap. 3.

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up in grand Words, is like the *Cupid*, in one of *Coyper's* Pieces, who is crept into *Mars's* Armour, and looks as if he was endeavouring to strut about in it: whilst a great Thought in little Words, puts one in Mind of that tall Gentleman we saw one Night at the Masquerade, dressed like an Infant; and dangling its Hands, as if it were perfectly helpless.

A Mixture of *Mean* Language with the *Grand*, makes the Meanness more visible; as possibly in this Line,

(a) Stript of his rags—He blaz'd out like a God.

Thus where a Libation to the Gods is called (b) *An Holy Beverage* in the *Odyssey*; and *Mars* (c) the *Heavenly Homicide* in the *Iliad*.

There seems to me to be something too mean for the Idea we form of a Giant, in this Expression;

(d) Her * Husband scow'r'd away—

And just after;

The Men like fish, they stuck upon the flood,

(e) And cramm'd their filthy throats with human
[food.]

(a) *Od.* 22, 2.

(b) *Od.* 3, 435,—339.

(c) *Il.* 21, 471.

* *Antiphates.*

(d) *Od.* 10, 131—115.

(e) *Od.* 10, 144—124.

In the same manner we hear of *Ulysses's* Companions, being (a) *dash'd like Dogs* by the *Cyclops*.

I doubt not this was express'd thus, to give us the larger Idea of that *Monster*: but might not it have been express'd so, as to serve that purpose, without giving us at the same time too low an Idea of the *Men*?

The Dignity of the Person will make any mean Language appear yet meaner. Whether we consider *Ulysses* as (b) *so great an Hero*, or as the (c) *Godlike Guest of Alcinous*, this Couplet sounds beneath his Character:

(d)——Shrunk with pining fast,
My craving bowels still require repast.

Nothing can be more just than *Horace's* Observation, (e) *That a King in Exile or Distress, must lay aside that Air of Grandeur, and those swelling Words which might become him in his Power*: Yet must he remember, that he has been a King: there's a Greatness even in Distress; and a due Medium between Words of a Foot-

(a) *Od.* 23, 337,—313.

(b) *Od.* 7, 228.

(c) *Od.* 7, 193.

(d) *Od.* 7, 296,—215.

(e) *De Arte Poet.* ver. 96.

and-a-half Long, and Monosyllables. Be that as it will, there is certainly much Reason, that he should reassume his Style with his Dignity: and (whatever may be said for that Speech of *Ulysses* in his Wanderings) after he is reinstated, he ought certainly to speak like a Monarch. I am afraid he fails in this respect, in the following Lines:

Be it my care, by loans, or martial toils,
To throng my empty'd folds with gifts or spoils:
But now I haste to bless *Laertes'* eyes,
(a) With sight of his *Ulysses*, ere he dies.

When the God of the Ocean sees *Ulysses* escap'd from his Dominion, he is so much provoked, that he flies immediately to the Throne of *Jupiter*, to lay his Complaints before the Father of the Gods: Let us hear part of his Speech on this grand Occasion:

Against *you destin'd head* in vain I swore,
And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd the shore;
(b) Behold him landed—*careless and asleep.*

When an Expectation is rais'd by the preceding Verses, and little or nothing follows upon this Expectation; — We need not quote (c) *Horace* to prove that

(a) *Od.* 23, 387, — 360.

(b) *Od.* 13, 156, — 135.

(c) *De Arte Poet.* ver. 139.

it will be *Mean*; every one will see it; and every one may see, that it arises from the Disproportion.

I have often observ'd, how fatal this Particular is to that sort of People, who are known by the Characters of *Story-tellers*. The greatest baulks these Gentlemen meet with, are occasion'd by their bespeaking Attention too much; and after all, ending in some inconsiderable Circumstance. There is a certain Passage in the *Odysssey*, which puts me in Mind of this Disaster so common to them:

Prepare then, said *Telemachus*, to know
(a) *A Tale*, from falsehood free, not free from woe.

What follows upon this? No earthly thing, I gad, as Mr. *Bayes* has it; only that he is the Son of *Ulysses*, and that he is searching after the King his Father.

There is another (b) Instance of this Nature, in that important Dialogue between *Neptune* and *Jupiter*, just mention'd.

Of this kind also is a certain Figure, which Mr. *Addison* (c) calls an *Anticlimax*: A Downfal in the Close, where a Passage has been very promising in the

(a) *Od.* 17. 295. — 270.

(b) See *Od.* 13. 164. to 172. — 140. to 147.

(c) *Misc.* Vol. 2. p. 300. 12°.

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Beginning. I remember he quotes a (*a*) *French* Couplet upon that Occasion, which I suppose might be design'd for Ridicule; but there are many Instances, from more serious Writers.

I beg leave to mention one thing, says *Antiphaus* — What you have been saying, may afford the reason, why that Species of Criticism, which goes upon Ridicule (in the *manner* of the *Hind* and *Panther*) is not to be depended upon: The best Lines that ever were wrote, may be render'd ridiculous, only by raising too great an Expectation in the Reader, just before they are introduc'd in the Criticism.

There is another kind of Littleness (proceeded *Philypsus*) when the Language does not become the Poetick Style; all *Prosaick* Poetry, or (as Dr. Garth us'd to call it) a *Diction* loytering into *Prose*, carries something of meanness with it; something below the Harmony, the Emotion, the Majesty, that is requir'd from the *Epick* Muse. — Here are two or three Couplets which I think descend too near to *Prose*;

(*a*) Allez vous, luy dit-il, sans bruit chez vos parens,
Ou vous avez laisse votre honneur, & vos gans. ib.

And

And now *Telemachus*, the first of all,
(a) Observ'd *Eumæus* entering in the Hall.

—Let *Eurymachus* receive my guest,
(b) Of nature courteous, and by far the best.

His food an herald bore; and now they fed,
(c) And now the rage of craving Hunger fled.

It might be thought too trifling to observe, that this Meanness is often owing to an ill-judg'd use of Monosyllables. (d) A Long Run of these little *Pigmy* Words, beside an unavoidable Air of Meanness, often makes a Line rough and hobbling; and almost ever keeps it from being firm and compact.

'Tis very rare, that you meet with a *Latin* Verse terminating in a single Monosyllable; and sometimes, where we do meet with it, 'tis evidently (e) design'd to assist in expressing the Littleness or Ridiculousness of the Subject.

Unless it be thus design'd, or be significant, a Verse (even an *Hemistick*) may be render'd Mean, merely by consisting

(a) *Od.* 17, 400, — 328.

(b) *Od.* 15, 560, — 517.

(c) *Od.* 8, 68 — 69.

(d) From *Vossius* de *Carm. Cantu*, p. 45.

(e) As in *Horace's* Art of Poetry, ver. 139. and *Virgil's* 1 *Georg.* ver. 181.

of these little Words. I know there are entire Lines of them that are tolerable, nay, that run with some degree of Vigour; as this in the *Odyssy*,

(a) Ere yet he loos'd the Rage of War on Troy.

And that *Close* in *Shakespeare*,

Cry'd Havock; and let slip the Dogs of War.

The Sentiments here are so great, that they take us off from observing the Littleness, which the Diction might otherwise occasion: Yet, to speak my Mind, I believe that these very Thoughts would appear more majestically in large adequate Expressions.

Beside this Littleness from the Nature of words, there is oftentimes a Meanness annex'd in our Thoughts to such particular Words and Phrases. All more *Vulgar* ways of speaking are mean in Poetry.——The Muse should reject any low *Proverbs*, and the Language of the Croud——Even the *Ideas* of things, in which they particularly are employ'd, are sullied and debas'd——I believe I may add, that whatever has an Air of *Burlesque*, or has been markt for ridicu-

(a) *Od.* 8, 78.

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ious on any other Occasion, will be apt to retain something of the *Mean*, wherever it is us'd.

His Shoulder-blade receiv'd th'ungentle shock;
He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock,
(a) But shook his thoughtful Head. —

I doubt not, I have formerly met with something in *Burlesque*, to which this Passage has a distant Resemblance: tho' the thing itself be gone out of my head, the distaste to such a particular Expression still remains with me. 'Tis true, this would not justify a Criticism; and yet it leads one unavoidably to dislike the Passage. — This sort of *Acquir'd Meanness* may be sometimes more general: as where *Menelaus* calls *Telemachus* (b) *The Mirror of constant Faith*. This Expression has been so often us'd in a ridiculous sort of Writings, that it will sound mean to the generality of those that hear it.

A Star-light Ev'ning, and a Morning fair. —

— Is a Line in *Dryden's Virgil*, (a) condemn'd by a very exact Critick, upon account of its being low and mean. 'Tis

(a) *Od.* 17, 550. — 463.

(b) *Od.* 4, 227.

(c) *Essay on Georg.* 1. Pref. p. 8.

of the acquir'd kind. Any one, who has been at all conversant with the Poetry of a Belman, will certainly look upon it with something of Contempt: Yet is there nothing Mean in it of itself; and a Critick in *France* might think it a good handsome Line. But the best Expressions degenerate, when us'd by the Populace, and applied to low things: the use they make of them, infects them with a low abject Air.

Thus *Proverbial* Speeches, and all other Expressions very common among us, become unworthy of our *Epick* Poetry. Foreign Proverbs are often great and emphatical to us; as many of ours may sound great to Foreigners; yet at home, both, if vulgar, will be apt to appear mean, or at least, unfit for the greater kinds of Poetry. One Instance, or two, will be sufficient: in the *Tenth Odysssey* we have this Line;

(b) With *broken hearts* my sad companions stood:

And this in the 22d,

(c) — Dogs, ye have had your Day. —

I shall not presume to say, how far the *Odysssey* or *Iliad* might be blameable for

(b) V. 227.

(c) V. 41, — 35.

for any of these Meannesses in the Days of *Homer* himself: it is the Privilege of every dead Language, to be entirely free from them at present. We hear not the Proverbs, nor know the current Ridicule of those Times. His Language is safe enough from the Vulgar now: And as to any Words that might have been vulgar enough then to seem low, we are in an entire ignorance even which they are. This is a considerable Advantage which the Ancients have over every living Writer; and for which, by the way, there should be some allowance made in any Comparison between an Ancient and a Modern.

Thus any Meanness that is *acquir'd*, may be *lost again*, or *worn off* by Time and Accidents. It is not so with Meanness in the Things themselves. They have something settled in them; and are deliver'd down to us through the Stream of Ages, unalter'd and the same. Perhaps, if we would take off the Veil, which Superstition has flung over the Worshippers of *Homer*, we might discern some traces of this in the Conversation of the *Suitors*; in the *Scene* at *Eumæus's* Lodge; and in *Sicily*, when we are with the *Cyclops*. 'Tis true, the *Odyssey* is built upon an humbler Plan: *Homer* suits himself to his Design: and it may be very

O

justly

justly said (with Mr. Pope) (a) *That where this Poem cannot support a Sublimity, it always preserves a Dignity, or at least a Propriety.* If these Points may fail in Dignity, they have always some Propriety in the Poem; either from the Speaker, or the Audience, or the Occasion.

To return to the Translation: Every Idea that has something awkward in it, has something mean and ridiculous. The first Laugh in the *Iliad* is occasion'd by the awkward Behaviour, and odd Address of *Vulcan*; as the only Laugh in the *Aeneid* is rais'd on the untoward Figure, which *Menates* makes in that Poem.

There seems to me to be something mean and awkward in this Image:

His loose head tott'ring, as with wine oppress'd,
(b) *Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast.*

Perhaps the *Sneezing-piece* in the 17th Book (c) borders too much on the same Fault; or, if it be no Fault, on the same Disagreeableness.

For the same Reason, all Descriptions that have any thing of the Nauseous in them, might be avoided in Poetry, or at

(a) *Od.* Vol. 5. p. 237. 120.

(b) *Od.* 18. 282, — 239.

(c) *Ver.* 625, — 541.

least they should be but slightly touch'd in it: I cannot think 'tis any particular niceness or effeminacy in my Temper, which inclines me to wish, that the Colours had not been laid on so strongly on some (a) Occasions. The worst Image I know of this kind is in the description of the *Drunken Cyclops*: and what is surprising to me, the very same Grossness, on the same Occasion, is kept up in (b) several of the best Poets that ever wrote.

—Here you will forgive me, if I am ready to sink under Authority, in a Point where my very Senses almost contradict it. But when such great Names, as *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Pope*, and *Addison* may be produced to defend one and the same Description, what are we to think, *Antiphaus*? Can we say a thing is not offensive, when we feel the contrary? or must we allow, that Nature ought to be justly and fully express'd, even in the most nauseous of Subjects?

It cannot be deny'd, (answer'd *Antiphaus*, after having turn'd the Question for some time in his Mind) every Description that is just, is *poetically good*; but then I fancy, 'tis as true, that a De-

(a) See *Od.* 4, 543, and 548,—10, 285, &c.

(b) *Od.* 9, 443,—373. *Æn.* 3, 632. *Addison's Misc.* Vol. 7. Pag. 61. 120.

scription poetically good, may be the more improper to be inserted, on that very Account. This will be readily allow'd in all Cases of Obscenity: The *best Description* in such Points is certainly the most *improper*; and surely the same will hold in a great measure of any Images directly nauseous. We have, you say, the Examples of the greatest Poets that ever wrote, against us: but if the reason of the thing be against them, no Authority whatever, nor any number of Examples, can be of the least real Weight. I am delighted with the Correctness of a *Virgil*, or an *Addison*; I admire *Pope*, and reverence *Homer*. But were there any one piece of Obscenity repeated in the Works of all these Great Men, would such a description alter its Nature, and become amiable? 'Tis the same in other Cases, as well as in Obscenities: All things, that have something in their nature disagreeable, will still be disagreeable, where-ever we find 'em.

The Line you hint at in the *Drunken Cyclops* cannot but carry a very nauseous Idea with it: and had Mr. *Pope* deviated from the Original, and dropt it in the *English*, I am persuaded most people would have look'd upon it as a commendable Injury to his Author. I remember

member (a) a Passage (of this Nature, tho' less gross than this) in the *Iliad*, which Mr. Pope has improv'd by concealing the Grossness of it; and in the Note upon it, he says, 'tis unworthy of Homer; he does not see any Colour to soften the Meanness of it; it must ever have been too nauseous to be describ'd.

What fine Criticks should we make, says *Philypsus*, since we can be both so ready to wish a Translator had err'd more frequently from his Copy? — But whatever those severe Gentlemen may think, we should certainly have a large Party on our side in the present Case. What would they say to another Principle? That it may be necessary to deviate from the Words of the Original, to preserve the Sense of it: And yet this may happen; as for instance, where our Notions of things are directly contrary to what was thought of them in *Homer's Days*.

Words are to be consider'd, not as Sounds, but as they are Significant: and a strict Translator should endeavour chiefly to give us the same Ideas which the Writer he represents gave to his Readers. It is on this Account I should take (b) *The Monarch of the Swains*, for Instance, to be a juster Translation of

(a) *Il.* 9, 612.

(b) *Od.* 16, 35,—36.

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Συβώτης ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, than the *Chief Swine-herd* would have been. In the present acceptation of things, a *literal Translation* would have been a *Travesty*: it would have made that ridiculous and mean, which was not mean or ridiculous in the Original.

Of old, *Useful* Employments were also *Honourable*. The chief Courtiers were Masters of the Flocks, and of the Herds: A Skill in Agriculture was reckon'd a very handsome part in the Character of a Monarch: *Homer* (a) places it upon a level with Military Science, and looks upon the Reputation it deserves, as equal to the Glory acquir'd by Atchievements in War.

To preserve something of these (b) Primitive Notions of things, at least not to sink into those very low Ideas, which we in the present world entertain of such sorts of Arts and Employments, a Translator of *Homer* is oblig'd to vary the Expressions in common use for the same things: Nothing would be more ridiculous now, than to call a *First Minister* by the Name of a *Hog-herd*; or to say of *Kings*, that they overlook'd the *Dairy*.

(a) See Note on *Od.* 18, 412.

(b) See *Od.* 4, 974. 14, 122. and 18, 412.

There are some other Points, relating to the *Manners* of Antiquity, which may require some Alterations in the turn of expressing them. I have been too tedious already; let me only mention one Particular of this kind, and I have done. The Heroes of old, in rating each other, are very free with the mutual Terms of *Dogs, Cowards, Villains, &c.* In the *Odyssey* we have a Queen calling one of her Maids of Honour, *an Impudent Bitch*; and *Jupiter*, if I mistake not, pays exactly the same Compliment to his Royal Consort in the *Iliad*. I think no one can dispute which is the better Translation in the former Case; The *New*, which makes *Penelope* call her Servant (a) *a loquacious Insolent*; or the Literal of *Hybbs*:

Bold Bitch, (said she) I know what deeds you've done.

This is equally a misrepresentation of Fact, and shocking in its very sound: It offends the Ear, and makes one startle at the Behaviour of *Penelope*. A Reader ought to think that Lady well bred: This he cannot do, at least he will be prejudic'd not to do so, by hearing such Language now, however decent it might be thought in those Times.

(a) *Od.* 19, 110,—91.

I am oblig'd to you (says *Antiphaus*, perceiving that *Philypsus* stopt here) for the fair account you have given of these Lownesses in an *Epick* Poem: I know not whether your general rule of Meanness will hold in every Point, that might be mention'd; but in those you have produc'd, it seems to square very well. I imagine too, there is one Particular, of pretty large extent in this Question, not yet touch'd upon.—There may be several; but you have all that I have observ'd, says *Philypsus*.——I doubt not (says *Antiphaus*) you have observ'd the same thing, and put it under some other Head. You must know, I would rank all Thoughts which border on *Puerility*, all cold *Fancies*, all forc'd *Antitheses*, and any mere *turns*, and *sporting* upon words, under the Class of Meannesses in an *Epick* Poem.—As you have hinted such a Variety of Subjects, says *Philypsus*, will you not complete the Favour, and afford some Instances too under these Heads? —What I can recollect (reply'd *Antiphaus*) is at your Service.

Does not there seem to you to be something *Affected* and *Cold* in this Thought, which I doubt not many will be apt to take for a pretty Clash in the Ideas?

Here

Here ceas'd he; but indignant tears let fall;
 (a) *Spoke* when he *Ceas'd*.——

Such is this Thought;

(b) And my toft limbs now *weary'd* into rest.

Nothing is meaner than what is overwrought: I own 'tis in Poetry, as in Statuary; Figures that are to be set up at such a height must be something larger than the Life; but even then there are exact Rules of Proportion, and nothing is to appear too vast to the Eye.

In giving one's Opinion of an exquisite Statue, we may say, it *lives* or *speaks*: but when we go to refine on this, we grow affected and mean. Pardon me if I take this to be the Case in the last Line of this Couplet:

Alive each animated Frame appears;
 (c) And *still to live, beyond the Pow'r of Years*.

I was formerly pleas'd with the Inscription under a *Saint Bruno* in *Italy*; but give it up now as carried too far; it

(a) *Od.* 24, 704, — 437.

(b) *Od.* 10, 593, — 499.

(c) *Od.* 7, 123, — 94.

tells us, as you may remember, (a) *That he is alive, and would speak, were it not for the Rules of Silence he had establish'd.* A Man must understand the History of the *Grand Chartreux* to take the meaning of this; and after all, it appears too forc'd and artificial.

A Fault of this kind is the more evident, when the Thoughts and Language look noble about it:

There terrible in arms *Ulysses* stood,
(b) And the dead Suitors *almost swam* in blood.

You know a late excellent (c) Philosopher has endeavour'd to prove, that no Action, which disagrees with truth, can be good; and I should not be new or singular in my Opinion, were I to assert the same of any point in Poetry. Every one knows, the Dialogues of one of the most (d) penetrating Criticks in the last Age are wrote chiefly in this View. He asserts constantly, that no Thought can be good, which is not poetically true; and I imagine this that he asserts, may be defended as easily in the *Fictions*

(a) Egli è vivo, e parlerebbe, se non osservasse la regola del Silenzio.

(b) *Od.* 23, 47, — 51.

(c) Mr. *Wollaston*.

(d) *Bouhours*.

of Poetry, as in any of the plainest Passages. But such an Enquiry would take up more time, than Criticism deserves; and I mention it at present only as a Measure of such Thoughts as are mean from their being false; i. e. really beneath what they pretend to be. — This Rule, if just, would be of particular service in this kind of Pursuits. I shall give you but one Instance: When *Circe* mentions *Ulysses's* Descent to the Infernal Shades, she adjoins this Reflection;

O Sons of woe! decreed by adverse Fates,
 Alive to pass thro' hell's eternal Gates!
 All soon or late, are doom'd that path to tread;
 (a) More wretched You, twice number'd with the
 [Dead!

Do you not think this last Thought has something *Weak* and *Little* in it? According to your general Rule, it fails in its *Proportion*; That *Proportion*, I mean, which every Thought should bear to *Truth*.

If it fails in that, says *Philypsius*, I must allow it to be Mean by my own Rule; but I do not perceive in what respect that Sentiment is false.

No! says *Antiphaus*; I beg you would consider the very Word on which the whole of the Reflection turns: It has

(a) *Od.* 12, 32. — 22.

plainly two Significations widely different. If their being *number'd with the Dead*, be taken in its strongest Sense, 'tis certain this did not happen twice to *Ulysses*, and his Companions; if in its weaker on this Occasion, their Calamity is put on a Level with something much more terrible and calamitous than itself.

Or thus: If this being *twice* number'd with the Dead be intended both in the same Sense, the Sentence is directly false; if in very different unequal Senses, 'tis fallacious, and so false in its Consequence.

I beg pardon for putting on this grave face, and affecting such an air of Demonstration: but you must know this Thought is exactly the same in the Original, or (if any thing) rather more fallacious there than in the Translation: in such a Case all one's Gravity is scarce sufficient; and the Superstitious perhaps would rather disbelieve a real Demonstration, than allow of any Fault in *Homer*. However, if they will only excuse me for having thus assum'd the *Chair of Criticism* (as the noblest of (a) human Writers calls it) I am very willing to descend, and act in an humbler Sphere.

All sporting upon Words may seem unbecoming of the *Epick Muse*: I shall

(a) Lord Bacon, *De Augm. Scient.* Lib. 6. Cap. 4.

leave you to determine how far there may be any suspicion of this in some particular Lines.

(a) *Thy last of Games unhappy hast thou play'd—*

—— to me has some resemblance to the rebellious Angels in *Milton*, where they run on in such a vein of insulting and punning. I know not how far the Original might help in leading a Translator into the former Turn; but here is another Line which runs into it, without that wrong bias:

(b) *They on the future banquet feast their eyes.*

I should think it yet more improper on any grave or affecting Circumstance: Do you remember the Death of *Antinous* in the *Odyssey*? 'Tis in the Instant of his lifting a Goblet of Wine to his Mouth:

Wretch that he was, of unprophetick Soul!
High in his hand he rear'd the Golden Bowl;
Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his Breath,

(c) *Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of*
[Death.]

I fear that some Points, which generally pass for Elegancies, are of this kind.

—— A Case, which touches all Rea-

(a) *Od.* 22, 32,—27.

(b) *Od.* 10, 205,—180.

(c) *Od.* 22, 13,—10.

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ders of a little Taste very much, is, (a) when two very different Ideas are join'd to the same Verb: This is very frequent in Cowley, and he has been often blamed for it; as in that Instance,

(b) Up rose the Sun and Saul.

I know not how it is, there is something agreeable in this management of Words, but it is very apt to injure the Sense. A thinking (c) French Author lays down a Rule, which is very useful towards discovering Fallacies in Reasoning; It is this: *To put the Definition instead of the Thing defin'd.* I have often try'd something of this nature in Poetry: If we make the Experiment in the present Case, and insert the *enlarg'd Meaning* instead of the *particular Words* used by the Poet, we shall generally find a Fallacy in this sort of Verse; or, at least, a Lameness in the Sense of it.

It will not be any great trouble to try this in one single Point. The Poet, speaking of *Telemachus's Voyage*, uses this Turn of Expression:

To distant *Pylus* hapless is he gone,
(d) To seek his Father's fate, and find his own.

(a) Addison's Misc. Vol. 1. p. 239. 12°.

(b) Od. 14, 454, — 410.

(c) Malbranche, Search after Truth. Vol. 2. p. 74.

(d) Od. 14, 209, — 180.

This sounds very well : but what is the meaning of the word *Fate*, which is of such double Service upon this Occasion? Try it in your own Mind :

*To distant Pylos hapless is he gone,
To seek (whether his Father be dead or not) and find*
—What?

There's no need of trying it, says *Philypsus*; I allow it to be deficient upon the first hearing: But by the way, I wonder you let the *Antithesis* in it escape so peaceably!

Indeed I am no great Friend to them, (reply'd *Antiphaus*) especially when they are multiplied upon us, as in this Line:

(a) *Dust mounts in clouds, and sweat descends in*
[dews.]

I do not fear my *Philypsus* should mistake me: it would be too scrupulous to discard every *Antithesis* out of Poetry, as it seems affected to run into them very often. Some are of Force and Emphasis, and some agreeable and engaging: Possibly, even the *Double Use of the same Word* is not absolutely to be rejected. But however these Ornaments may obtain on some Occasions, they seem generally too little and artificial for the more

(a) *Od.* 11, 740.—599.

noble Parts of Poetry. They are of the *Ovidian* kind, rather than of *Homer*: and are more apt to hit the Taste of School-boys, than of Men.

And now I have mention'd *Ovid*'s manner, give me leave to say, that (in spite of his several Beauties, and that peculiar Ease and Address with which he tells a Story) I fear his Writings are one great Reason of the trifling Manner keeping its ground so much in the present Age. *Ovid* is generally made use of to initiate us on *Parnassus*. We look upon him as soon as ever we open our Eyes to Poetry: He is then, 'tis true, fit for our Taste; but the misfortune is, he is too agreeable: 'tis odds but this fondness grows up with us; and a false taste of Wit, drawn from him, may influence our Writings many Years after we have flung him from our Bosom. The *Boyisms* of *Ovid* (as Dr. Garth calls 'em) are agreeable enough to infect us to old Age. Mr. *Dryden*, for Instance, was thus infected by 'em: *Ovid*, and *Cowley* our *English Ovid*, were his favourites at Ten Years old, and his Corrupters at *Seventy*.

As great Genius's, and more correct Writers than Mr. *Dryden*, may be touch'd with the same Infection. I will give you an Instance or two of this, with which a
Person

Person may be pleas'd, even while he condemns 'em:

(a) She to her present Lord laments him lost,
And views that object which she wants the most.

Again:

His arms he stretch'd; his arms the touch deceive;

(b) Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give.

Any one, the least acquainted with the Manner of the Poets, will readily perceive this to be of the *Ovidian* kind. It is pretty, and agreeable as *Ovid*; but to be so, it loses something from the Air of *Homer*; it sinks beneath that Simplicity and Nature, which is the distinguishing Character of his Writings.

Now you mention Mr. *Dryden*, and this sort of pretty Writing together, give me leave (says *Philypsus*) to commend one sort of *Turns*, which that Critick (c) judges not only pretty, but really good and substantial: I will not defend all his Instances, but I would engage to do it, were they all as good as that from (d) *Virgil*——A very good Critick since has treated of this more distinctly. His

(a) *Od.* 19, 245,—209.

(b) *Od.* 11, 487,—391.

(c) *Dryden's* Pref. to *Juvenal*, p. 84. 8°.

(d) *Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.*

Notions,

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Notions, as I remember, are, That a dextrous Turn upon Words, is pretty; the Turn upon the Thought, *substantial*; but the most *complete* of all, is when the Turn of the Words and of the Thought concur: (a) *When both our Reason and our Ear are entertain'd with a noble Sentiment express'd vigorously, and beautifully finish'd.* I should be glad to know your Opinion, *Antiphaus*, how far a Person might admit these Turns, in *Heroick Poetry*?

As for the first (says *Antiphaus*) I believe one might venture to say, that it should be rejected universally: I am so little vers'd in these Particulars, that I cannot readily say any thing as to the second: the other (whether justly or not) takes one very much. I own, for my part, that I imagine them not only beautiful, but useful: I remember an Instance of (b) one in *Virgil*, which fixes the Images very particularly on the Mind; and it is this which helps to touch us in those Lines of Mr. *Addison*, which strike every one who reads them:

The list'ning Soldier fixt in sorrow stands,
Loth to obey his Leader's just commands;
The Leader grieves, by gen'rous pity sway'd,
(a) To see his just commands so well obey'd.

(a) *Blackwall's Introd. to the Classics*, p. 214.

(b) *Georg.* 1. 404.

(c) *Addison Vol. 1. Pag. 76. 12°.*

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If you ask my opinion in this Point, rude and unsettled as it is; I should think, that no *Turns* should obtain in an *Epick*, or any solemn Poem, except such as have more Strength than Beauty: That in lesser Pieces, those may be allowed which have more Beauty than Strength: but that they can be justified in no Piece whatever; unless they have some Share of Strength, as well as Beauty.

The great Art of them is to appear Unartful; as in these pretty Lines from Mr. *Philips's* Pastorals;

Fair is my Flock, nor yet uncomely I,
If liquid Fountains flatter not; and why
Should liquid Fountains flatter us, yet show
The bord'ring flow'rs less beauteous than they
[grow]

As I take it; the Beauty of this Passage is in a greater degree, than its Strength; and the natural Air of the Sentiments is more exquisite than either: The Turn of the Lines makes them observ'd by every Reader more than they would otherwise be; and yet that very Turn does not seem to be design'd, but rather to be the natural Result of the Shepherd's Thoughts as he speaks them.

If I have said too much, *Philypsus*, you must blame yourself for it, who led me from my chief Design. I was just entering

tering on the several Natural Pieces in the Poem before us.

Some fanciful Writers afford us nothing but Pictures and Descriptions: they continue Image after Image; and put one in Mind of those *Americans*, who, when first they were discover'd, are said to have us'd Painting instead of Writing.

Homer's Judgment will not allow him, in any of his Works, to be thus perpetual in his Descriptions; and the design of the *Odyssy* will not allow near the variety, which he has very justly employ'd in the *Iliad*. The *Odyssy* is a Poetical Treatise of Morality: it does not admit of a profusion of Colours. This is not to be look'd upon as a Defect: we might with the same Reason blame a Book of Maxims, or *Plato's* Moral Dialogues, for not having all the Flourishes and Charms of Rhetorick.

And as the Plan of the *Odyssy* in general excludes that great variety of Description, which abounds in some Poems; the chief Scene, in the remaining Part of it, is so wholly domestick, that it scarce allows room for any thing of that Nature. The Action now is confin'd; it lies all between either the Country-House of *Eumæus*, and the Palace; or this latter, and the Gardens of *Laertes*.

What

What a narrow Scene is this for Description? and yet these are the only places capable of any, if you except a two days Journey, and a short Voyage in the 15th, neither of which could be enlarg'd upon without injuring the main Design. *Homer* was unacquainted with the modern Affluence of Painting, wherever there may be any fine Object in the way: As these Opportunities offer only in an Episode, he passes them with the utmost dispatch: we see his haste in the very Lines, and indeed in every one of them distinctly:

With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind:
Minerva calls; the ready gales obey
With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea
Crunus they pass'd; next *Chaleis* roll'd away—
The silver *Phæa's* glittering rills they lost,
(a) And skimm'd along by *El's* sacred coast.

It might be the indigence of his Subject this way, which induc'd *Homer* to repeat the View of Hell in the 24th Book; and the Wanderings of *Ulysses* in the 23d. But nothing could make him run into Descriptions on that Occasion. We have the Names of Places repeated

(a) *Od.* 15, 319, ——— 296.

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in Order; and tho' *Penelope* has the full Relation, the Reader is only tantaliz'd with hearing in general, that

(a) He images the rills, and flow'ry vales.

These things, however they had been laid out, would have been only Side-views. For in the main Scene, as it now lies in *Ithaca*, I think there are but four *Places* capable of Description. If I am not mistaken in this, it will give us great Reason to admire the Management of *Homer*; who, as he was too prudent to run out into any impertinent Descriptions; at the same time, has not omitted any one of those places, that might very well allow of a Description without wandering. We have distinct draughts of *Laertes's* Gardens, (b) *Eumæus's* Lodge, of (c) the *Royal Palace*, and the Road between these and the Palace. These complete the present Scene of the Poem; and any one, by laying them together, may form an exact Picture of it in his Mind.

Some of these have been mention'd already on other Occasions; and the way

(a) *Od.* 23, 336.

(b) *Od.* 14. ver. 8. to 26.

(c) *Od.* 17, 316 and 415.

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from *Eumæus's* House to the Metropolis
deserves very well to be mention'd here:
I dare say, you will think part of it the
most delightful Road you ever travell'd
in your Life:

Now pass'd the rugged Road, they journey down
The cavern'd way descending to the Town,
Where, from the rock with liquid lapse distils
A limpid fount; that spread in parting rills,
Its current thence to serve the city brings,
An useful work; adorn'd by ancient Kings.
Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there
In sculptur'd Stone immortaliz'd their care;
In marble urns receiv'd it from above,
And shaded with a green surrounding grove;
Where silver Alders in high arches twin'd,
Drink the cool stream, and tremble to the wind.
Beneath, sequester'd to the Nymphs, is seen
A mossy Altar, deep embow'd in green;
Where constant Vows by travellers are made;
(a) And holy horrors solemnize the shade.

There is a sort of melancholy Plea-
sure hangs upon the Mind, where-ever
we have a View of *Laertes* in his Retire-
ment. The good old Prince (b) labours
thorough Life; he (c) longs to lay down
the Burden: And when he is not so
overcome with his Distress, as to (d) ne-

(a) *Od.* 17. ver. 230 to 245.

(b) *Od.* 15, 151.

(c) *Od.* 11, 226.

(d) *Od.* 16, 155.

glect his Employment in his Gardens, he seems busy rather to (a) avoid Pain, than to enjoy Pleasure. This is he engag'd with something of Diversion, and much of Melancholy, when the Scene changes to his Gardens.

We have not a set Description of these altogether; but it begins at this Point, and is carried on (b) successively, till we may easily form an Idea of the whole.

Tho' *Homer* has not wander'd into any Descriptions of Places that lay out of this Scene of the Poem, he has here, and all along in the former part of it, brought in short Draughts and Side-views of things by such Arts, as are some of them necessary, and all very allowable in Poetry.

Such are all *descriptive Similies*: Wherein some Picture out of the Subject is borrowed to illustrate any Point that belongs to it. This affords us several occasional Pieces, and some of them very natural: I have just dipt upon one of this sort. 'Tis just after the Slaughter of the Suitors; they are yet gasping, and *Ulysses* is surveying their Bodies, to see whether the Number be complete:

(a) *Od.* 24, 285.

(b) *Od.* 24, ver. 237, 256, 263, and 395.

So when by hollow shores the fisher train
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main,
And scarce the meshy toils the copious draught
[contain: }

All naked of their Element, and bare,
The fishes pant, and gasp in thinner air;
(a) Wide o'er the sands are spread the stiffning
[prey.

It's a known Remark, that all Allusions of this kind, drawn from calm Life, (as Fishing, Hunting, and rural Affairs) have a peculiar Beauty: and 'tis as well known, that they acquire an additional Energy, when they are introduc'd amidst any Confusion, or to illustrate Images of Terror. *Virgil* (b) has imitated this sort of Contrast from a Simile in the *Iliad*; which affords frequent Instances of the same kind; nor are they wanting in the (c) Poem before us.

The more concise and natural any Image, the stronger the Illustration. How do you approve of this, on a number of Females employ'd at the Loom?

—— Their busy fingers move
(d) Like Poplar-leaves, when Zephyr fans the grove.

(a) *Od.* 22, 430, — 387.

(b) Compare *Æn.* 2, 303. *Il.* 8, 455.

(c) See *Od.* 12, 300. and the Note there.

(d) *Od.* 7, 135, — 106.

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When these occasional Images hit in several Points, they are the more descriptive of the things, which they are brought to illustrate. *Homer* gives us an Idea of the Spirits in *Hades*, of their still Posture, their Motion, their Confusion, and the odd Noises they utter, all in one single Picture of this kind:

Trembling the Spectres glide, and plaintive vent
Thin, hollow Screams, along the deep descent.
As in the cavern of some rifted Den,
Where flock nocturnal Bats, and Birds obscene;
Cluster'd they hang, till at some sudden thock,
They move, and murmurs run thro' all the rock:
So cowering fled the fable heaps of ghosts,
(a) And such a Scream fill'd all the dismal coasts.

It seems not improper to point out these distinct Likenesses; as the Translation has done in the present Case, more plainly than the Original; the same may be said of (b) some others. This is done sometimes by insisting much on one Circumstance, (c) and repeating it over and over.

Borrow'd Images appear with a particular Propriety and Grace, when they have some near Relation to the Scene, on

(a) *Od.* 24, 14,—9.

(b) See *Od.* 5, 420,—330.

(c) As in Mr. Pope's *Iliad* 22, ver. 257 to 262.

which

which the Poem turns at the very Instant of applying them. Thus in the *Battle of Rivers*; in the (a) *Iliad*, every Simile is aquatick, and adapted to the Place. Thus if the Swiftness of a Deity passing o'er the *Land* is to be illustrated in this manner, *Homer* images it by the Swift-ness of an *Eagle*: but when *Mercury* is flying over the *Sea*, by that of some (b) *Water-fowl*.

The Image of an Angler is us'd in the *Iliad*, of a person in the Field of Battle; in the (c) *Odyssey*, of persons at Sea; both on Occasions which make that Image proper. But it seems more proper in the latter, from the Agreement of Place. In this, and all like Cases, part of the Picture is nearer to us, and will be conceiv'd the more readily and clearly.

There may also be some propriety from any previous Relation between the Person, and the Thing to which he is compar'd. Any faithless wavering Creature may be compar'd to the Sea; but it strikes one more, when *Venus* is said to be as (d) *Inconstant, as the Waves from whence she*

(a) Book 21.

(b) *Od.* 5, 64.

(c) *Od.* 12, 300.

(d) *Guarini's Pastor Fido*, Att. 4. Sc. 7.

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sprung. Any rough Man may be compar'd to this Element, in another view; but there is a peculiar fitness in these Lines:

A race of rugged Mariners are these,
(b) Unpolish'd Men, and boist'rous as their Seas.

I remember, I us'd formerly to be mightily taken with an Image of this kind in the (b) *Muscipula*; and I believe now, it was on this very Account. Ideas which have been already join'd on any other Occasion, will agree the more easily on a new one.

The Picture is less broken also, when the borrow'd Image is adapted to the present Circumstances: Where *Penelope* is represented as chaste and beautiful, 'tis said she look'd (c) like *Diana* with all the Charms of *Venus*; when her Beauty is the chief Circumstance to be insisted on, she is compar'd to (d) *Venus*, without any mention of *Diana*.

(a) *Od.* 7, 42.

(b) — Cui saepe suis in montibus hircus
Prolixam invidit barbam — De *Cambro-Brit.*

Thus *Virgil's*,

Abjetibus juvenes patriis & montibus æquos.

(c) *Od.* 17, 47. — 37.

(d) *Od.* 18, 229. — 192.

We

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We may observe, by the way, that the Heathen Poets, in comparing a Person to any of their Deities, had a sure Method of giving their Readers a Picture of that Person. The Statues of their Deities were known by every one; and the Faces of each as well ascertain'd, as the Faces of the *Roman* Emperors (for instance) can be, by frequently conversing with their Medals; this I take to be one Reason, why this sort of Comparison is so very frequent in the Ancients: The Case is very different in any modern Composition; tho' we see n to be equally fond of the same Comparisons.

If it does not add to the Strength, at least it makes the Piece more agreeable, when these Images are unusual. Thus the Comparison of *Ulysses* in his Bed of Leaves, to a (a) Coal of Fire preserv'd in the Embers; and before in his raft at Sea, to an (b) heap of Thorns, driven by the Wind.

There may be a *Prettiness*, as well as a *Likeness* in these Images; I always us'd to be pleas'd with that Passage, where *Penelope* is compar'd to a (c) Nightingale; tho' I am more pleas'd with the same Image in (d) *Virgil*; which, beside its

(a) *Od.* 5, 630. — 488.

(b) *Ibid.* 417.

(c) *Od.* 19, 605. — 518.

(d) *Georg.* 4, 511.

agreeableness, is perhaps the most complete Instance, that can be given, of such Similitudes as hit exactly in every Point. *Virgil* certainly excels *Homer* in these, as we may say that *Homer* excels him in the *Vague Similitude*; for both have their distinct Beauties.

'Tis the proper air of Poetry to be unconfin'd and free: The Muse loves a flowing Dress: Her motions are ever easy, and her very ornaments must be natural. Such is the Muse of *Homer*. And hence the Poet, in this sort of Pictures, does not in the least scruple to take in several Circumstances, that do not affect the main Resemblance. When a Painter is copying a Piece, he must preserve the Likeness; but he may vary in the Drapery, the Posture, the Under-figures, and the Scene around them.

Thus in *Homer's Philomel*, the main Likeness is very well taken: When the Poet has secur'd this; he touches upon the History of *Itylus*; and launches out into Particulars, which are (a) so far from squaring with the Case of *Penelope*, that they have no manner of Relation to it.

Homer is almost singular in another sort of Simile, the Reverse of the former;

(a) *Od.* τ', 523.

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when the principal Figures have in themselves no Likeness, but agree in some one Circumstance of Action. These are very frequent in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; and I cannot say, whether it be from a true Judgment, or a scrupulous Niceness, that later Writers endeavour to imitate them but very rarely.

Perhaps this is blameable; and so may be that stringing of several Similes together, which we sometimes meet with in *Homer*. I do not mean when several things are chosen to illustrate the (a) *same* Point more fully: but when Similes on *different* things follow too close on the Neck of one another. In the 2d *Iliad*, (b) we have one of these strings, which takes up thirty Lines; and tho' they are all excellently well chosen, and have one common Point of Union between them all, yet they may seem something faulty, as they are too numerous for the Place in which they stand, and too much crowded on one another.

Now I have digress'd so far on two or three Vices in ancient Similes, I shall next mention one or two of a later Date. Such is the *continued* Simile, which is very liable to the great Fault of mixt Me-

(a) See *Il.* ξ' , 394.

(b) ——— β' , 453 to 483.

taphors, when a Writer, to lengthen a *Comparison*, carries it beyond the *Likeness*. I remember one in the Dedication, prefixt to Mr. *Dryden's* Translation of *Virgil's Georgicks*, that begins very well: "The Greatness of Birth shews a Nobleman with advantage; but if he degenerates, the least Spot is visible on Ermine." — But grows very faulty, when 'tis endeavour'd to stretch it farther than it will bear. "To preserve this Whiteness in its original Purity, you (my Lord) have, like that Ermine, forsaken that common tract of Business, which is not always clean."

The Art of extracting Similes out of a thing directly contrary to your purpose, is, I think, wholly modern. Every one knows an Instance of this in that famous Doctor, who, to illustrate the *Danger* of the Church, compares it to one of the Prophets, who was encompass'd with Horsemen and Chariots of Fire — for his defence.

Nothing is so opposite to the Design of this Beauty in Poetry, as to labour after a vast Number of Likenesses in any the minutest Points; and to multiply them, rather to shew how far the Poet's Wit can carry the Resemblance, than to strengthen the Image of the things describ'd. This descends even to playing upon

upon Words; nay sometimes to particularize several Points in which they are *unlike*, as well as those in which they agree. This is the *Cowleian* Similitude: and I could produce (a) monstrous Instances of it from a very fine Writer, where he endeavours only to imitate *Cowley* at a Distance. 'Tis the same Person who has introduc'd Similes into his *Prose*, in a manner unknown to the Ancients: but he who would blame any of his Writings of *this kind*, must blame them, as Mr. *Locke* does Eloquence, with the Tenderness of a Lover.

The (b) chief Design of Similes is to make things clear: Obscurity and Confusion is their great Fault: Poetry may go much farther in them than *Prose*; but, even in Poetry, none can be good, which do not give us either more distinct, larger Notions of the thing, or at least of some Circumstance of the thing to be describ'd.

I long to add several things on this Head; but I have wander'd too far already from our chief Design: it is time now to consider a higher Class of De-

(a) See a *Pindarick Ode* on *Cowley*, in *Dryden's Misc.* (Vol. 4.) particularly the whole third *Stanza*.

(b) Ad inferendam rebus lucem reperta sunt Similitudines. — Præcipuè custodiendum, ne id quod Similitudinis gratiâ adscivimus, aut obscurum sit, aut ignotum. *Quintil. Instit.* Lib. 8. Cap. 3.

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scriptions and Images (which we touch'd upon when we were talking over the former Books of the *Odyssey*) that Poetical Power of expressing the *Passions*, and even *Ideas* yet in the Minds of Men.

I am oblig'd to you, *Philypsus*, for preventing much of what might have been offer'd here, when you were considering the Starts and Turns, which our *Passions* occasion in the various manners of speaking. I know not how such a Notion would appear to the World; but you have thoroughly persuaded me, that all the Figures of Speech, of the (a) Nobler Order, are viewed in a truer Light, when we look upon them, as naturally expressive of what we feel within us; than when we consider them only as the Arts and Machineries of Writing.

It was on this Occasion you went thorough the most passionate Scenes in the *Odyssey*; for such are the several Interviews in which *Ulysses* makes himself known to his (b) Friends, his (c) Son, his (d) Father, and his (e) Consort. *Penelope's* (f) Speech at that juncture is ex-

(a) Figures either belong to the *Diction*, or the *Sentiment*: the latter is what is here intended.

(b) Book 21.

(c) Book 16.

(d) Book 24.

(e) Book 23.

(f) *Od.* 23, 215.

cellent;

cellent; and indeed all her Speeches in general are of the *Pathetick* kind, and (under this view) afford us the most beautiful Passages in the whole Poem.

To the many things that have been said on the *Double Passions* (as you were pleas'd to let me call them) give me leave to add one particular Case more: what I mean, is *Disimulation*. We have frequent Descriptions of this in the *Odysssey*: Every Instance of it (if passionate at all) will fall under this Consideration; and that in the highest Degree, as the *Passion assum'd*, and the *real*, are direct Opposites. Every one, who only pretends to *Courage*, is certainly affected with *Fear*; and when we put on a false Gaiety, the *Heart* is as dull and oppress'd, as the *Countenance* is enliven'd.

Could we look into the Breast of one who affects a Liveliness, when his Thoughts are really gloomy; we should see his Spirits in such contrary Emotions, as are describ'd in the Suitors, under those unaccountable mixt fits of Mirth and Heaviness——

(a)——*Pallas* clouds with intellectual gloom
The Suitors Souls, insensate of their doom;
A mirthful phrenzy seiz'd the fated croud,
The Roofs resound with causeless laughter loud—
Then down each cheek the tears spontaneous flow.

(a) *Od.* 20, 419.

Such is that (a) Smile on the Face of *Penelope*, which has something very uneasy in it: She seems all the while to struggle with her Tears. 'Tis like a transient Gleam of Light, when the Heavens are overcast: all around is gloomy; and the Light itself is dim and watery.

This perhaps is an Instance, not of the affected, but the natural Kind. 'Tis true, one Passion sometimes usurps the Effect of another: Without tumbling over *Descartes* for a Solution of the matter, we know, that an Excess of Joy often breaks out into Tears; and that Rage may vent itself in a Smile. These indeed are contrary Appearances; but 'tis very different in all Points of Dissimulation. The Mixture then has something peculiar in it. Contrary to the natural Blending of such Emotions, this has always an Air forc'd and artificial. The Soul was not made to be a Counterfeit: every time we would teach her these new Arts, we fling her off her Biass, and give her an unnatural Motion. There will ever be something awkward in the Passions of the most profound Dissemblers.

Only view *Ulysses*, when he is struck to the Soul with the Affection and Tears

(a) *Od.* 18, 194 — 162.

of his *Penelope*, and at the same time resolv'd to conceal those his Emotions from her, as much as possible:

(a) With'ring at heart to see the weeping Fair,
His eyes look stern, and cast a gloomy stare;
Of horn the stiff relentless balls appear,
Or globes of iron fixt in either Sphere;
Firm wisdom interdicts the soft'ning tear.

Even *Ulysses*, that *Ulysses* who is so (b) celebrated among the Ancients for his Command over his Passions, does not appear without something forc'd and unnatural in his Looks, amidst all his Dissimulation. He can command his Tears; he can command his Tongue; but still his very Features would betray him.

I know not what to say to one thing: That *Homer* makes Dissimulation one of the greatest Excellencies of his Hero. The Heathen System of Morality was incomplete enough to bear with this proceeding: and even Christians of the greatest Name have border'd much on the same Notions. One of our ancient Writers, who was as capable as any of them to do it, has (c) launch'd out into a long defence of *useful Frauds*; and *Father Paul*,

(a) *Od.* 19, 247.

(b) See Note, *ibid.*

(c) See *Chrysost.* Tom. 6. p. 5. Ed. *Savil.* ΘΑΡΣΕΙ, ἐπεὶ ἐγὼ, &c.

to mention one not inferior among the Moderns, reckons Diffimulation (a) expressly among the Virtues of *Pope Clemens the Seventh*. I do not mention this as any Argument for the thing; but to extenuate the Proceeding of *Homer*. 'Tis no wonder that he should mistake a counterfeit Virtue in the dark, which such great Men could not distinguish in the Light.

But whatever Colour Diffimulation may bear in the Schemes of Morality, it is certainly a great Excellence to paint Diffimulation well in Poetry. The pretended Passion must appear most strongly, and yet the real Passion must appear under it. It must be like the Drapery in Pictures, which shews the turn of the Limbs, at the same time that it hides them; and in particular, puts one in mind of that Veil in *Homer*, *which seems, and only seems*, to shade the Face of *Penelope*.

There is nothing more difficult in Poetry, than to express justly Ideas in the Minds of Persons whom we describe.

(a) Where the Historian says, that *Pope* died " *Con allegrezza non mediocre della corte: la quale ben ammirava le vertu di quello, che erano una gravita naturale, & esemplare parsimonia, & dissimulazione; odiava però maggiormente l'avaritia durezza & crudelta.*" *Hist. del Concilio Trid.* p. 68.

But tho' this be the least obvious, 'tis perhaps the most agreeable of all Studies. The Poet must search carefully into the Nature of Man, and the Working of his Thoughts in general: He must know what Emotions are natural on each Accident of Life; and on every single Occasion is to consider, not only the Circumstances of Actions, but also the Temper, the Education, and the very *make* of the Person concern'd in them. These will alter Men's Views of the very same Point. When *Nestor* talks of Achievements in War, he will dwell chiefly upon the Prudence and Experience of a General; *Hector* will mention the great effects of Strength and Courage; *Ulysses* must place the whole on a bold daring Spirit, without taking the Body into the Account; while *Polypheme*, on the contrary, must speak of nothing but the Advantage of a vast Size, and superior Strength.

A Man's Notions of Excellence are form'd generally from some advanc'd Powers of his own. Each Man is apt to make himself the Measure of all the Species; and his Species the Standard of all Perfection. All Beings above him must be exactly like the superior Moiety of his own Being, and all below him must be purely of the inferior. The Vulgar
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of Mankind form their Heaven hereafter out of those things which have pleas'd them most in Life; and the very Notions of the Deity in most Men take a Turn from their own Complexions. The God of proud *tyrannical* Minds is a Being that delights only in the *Glory of being Terrible*; as with the soft and pitiful, the Deity is *all Mercy*: the Gods of *Epicurus* were mere pleasurable Intelligences; and the Deities of the *Irroquois* are *mighty Hunters*. Commend me to that Philosopher who said, that *were his Horse to give us his Nction in this Case, a broad Chest, and a flowing Mane would certainly be the principal things in it.*

One cannot easily apprehend how general an effect this has in the Actings of our Minds. I know not that it is yet designedly manag'd in any System of Philosophy (for Mr. *Locke's Association of Ideas* seems to be something very distinct from it); and as it wants a Name, give me leave to call it for the present, The *Assimilation of Ideas*.

If you would save me from a Fit of Philosophizing, be so good as to reach that Volume of the *Odyssey* just by you, that I may read you a Passage which struck me particularly, on this Account. 'Tis where *Ulysses* has acquainted the *Cyclops* with his real Name and Character:

rafter: this is part of the Monster's
Answer:

Oh Heav'ns! oh Faith of ancient Prophecies!
This, *Telemus*, *Eurymides* foretold: —
Long since he menac'd such was Heav'n's command,
And nam'd *Ulysses* as the destin'd hand.
I deem'd some Godlike Giant to behold,
Or lofty Hero, haughty, brave and bold;
Not this weak Pygmy wretch, of mean Design,
(a) Who not by Strength subdu'd me, but by Wine.

Even the Excellence of those things,
with which we converse chiefly, is apt
to influence our Thoughts in the same
manner. Hence the Eastern Writers
image the Height and Stateliness of any
illustrious Person, by *Cedars*: *Homer*, by
the (b) *Delian Palm-tree*; and *Virgil*, by
what a *British* Reader will think the most
noble, a (c) *large lofty Oak*.

There's a Passage which, I remember,
I was mightily pleas'd with formerly, in
reading *Cervantes*, without seeing any
Reason for it at that Time; tho' I now
imagine, that which took me in it comes
under this View: Speaking of *Don Quixote*,
the first time that Adventurer came in
sight of the Ocean, he expresses his Sen-

(a) *Od.* 9, 604, — 516.

(b) *Od.* 5, 163, — 6, 193.

(c) *Æn.* 9, 682, and 12, 700.

timents on this occasion in the following manner: *He saw the Sea, which he had never seen before; and thought it much bigger than the River at Salamanca.*

This Turn of Thought is not so commonly observ'd perhaps as it might easily be in Life. There are other occasional *Traces* in the Mind, which are known and obvious: Things that are common in some degree to all Men; and such are all those Apprehensions which follow from any *Master-Passion*. One might expatiate here very agreeably on each of them; but I am ever apt to be too tedious; and will therefore confine myself to one single Passion, that of *Fear*.

We may see in the Descriptions of the Poets, how this Passion acts on the Soul through all its different Degrees, from a *Wavering* and *Irresolution* of Mind, to the *Excess* of *Confusion* and *Despair*.

When a Coward (as most Cowards are vain-glorious) undertakes any Enterprize of Difficulty, the Moment he is engag'd in it, his Mind turns all upon the Danger of the Undertaking. He immediately wishes himself fairly out of it; his Body begins to tremble, and his Thoughts are all confus'd and irresolute. Thus it is with *Dolon*. That Wretch engages, under the Covert of the Night, to steal to the Camp of the *Greeks*, and discover their
Motions.

Motions. Before he is got half way, the first tread of Men that he hears, *He hoped in his Mind* (says (a) Homer) *that 'twas a Messenger from Hector to recall him.*

The whole Book, where we have this Image, is nothing but one Picture of Fear in different Postures: The apprehensions of distant Danger are very naturally express'd in the *Grecian Guard*;

———— Cautious of surprize,
Each Voice, each Motion draw their ears and eyes;
(b) Each Step of passing feet increas'd th' affright.

Mr. Pope seems to have improv'd this Description beyond the Original, from (c) *Virgil's Achæanides.*

Any near Danger has more visible Effects; the Motions of a Person, thus affected, are (d) broken and disorder'd; his Colour comes and goes; his Eyes are (e) disturb'd; he cannot bear to look

(a) *Il. x', 355.*

(b) *Il. 10, 221, ——— 189.*

(c) ——— *Vastos a rupe Cyclopas
Prospicio, sonitumque pedum, vocemque tremisco.*
Æn. 3, 648.

(d) ——— *Ex oculis se turbidus abstulit. ———* *Æn. 11, 814.*

————— *Tum pectore sensus
Vertuntur varii. Rutulos aspectat & urbem,
Cunctaturque metu, telumque instare tremiscit.* 12, 916.

(e) *Tum primum nostri Cæcum videre timentem,
Turbaturque oculis. ——— 8, 223.*

(f) full

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(a) full on the Face of his Enemy: he approaches faintly, and winks even when he strikes.

Fear has another strange Property of *magnifying* our Ideas of the Danger. When we are possess'd with it, we are apt, like *Sofia* in the Play, to take every Shadow for a Man, and every Man for a Giant. If the Danger be present, we think it greater than it is; and to its real Terrors, add a Thousand that are only imaginary. Thus the Suitors view *Ulysses*, when he is ready to revenge himself upon them: their Fears (b) aggravate every Fierceness of his Actions; they look upon him as more than human, as an incens'd destructive Deity.

If I mistake not, there's a certain great Writer who calls Fear, *A natural Inebriation of the Mind*: it shews every thing double. I know not what the *Mythologists* may teach; but this, in my Opinion, might account for the Multiplicity of *Cerberus's* Heads, and all the Hands of *Briareus*.

(a) ——— Οὐκ ἐτάλασας
 Στήθεσσι δ' ἄντα, κατ' ὅρε' ἰδὼν δ' ἴω' ἐν αὐτῇ,
 Οὐδ' ἰδυῖς μαχέσασθαι. ——— Ἰλ. ε', 169.

(b) *Od.* 24, 201, 10 208.

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There is something very expressive in a Thought of *Virgil's*, if we might take it under this View:

——— *Se Turni media inter millia vidit,*
(a) *Hinc acies, atque hinc acies astare Latinas.*

This spreading of any Danger in our Ideas may widen so far as to possess the whole Mind. Then it is, that it takes away all (b) Power of Action, even (c) of Flight; it fixes (d) the Eye entirely in one horrid Stare: and even (e) shuts up all the Senses to any other Object, but that of its Terror and Amazement. It is this Excess of Fear which, in any imminent Danger, makes a Person (f) think it impossible that he should escape; and

(a) *Æn. 9, 550.*

(b) *Od. 12, 245.*

(c) *Od. 18, 284.*

(d) ——— *Subitus tremor occupat artus;*
Dirigere oculi: tot Erinnyes sibilat hydri,
Tantaque se facies aperit. ——— *Æn. 7, 448.*

(e) *Ὠς ἔφατ', ὅτ' ἐσάκυσσε πολύτλας Δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,*
ἀλλὰ παρῆιζεν, &c. — *Il. 9, 98.*

See Note on *Odyssey* 10, 395.

(f) This sort of Idea is strongly express'd in the *Odyssey*:

Gods! should the stern *Ulysses* rise in might,
Those gates would seem too narrow for thy Flight.

18, 427, — 6, 385.

it

I

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it remains so strong and lively, that after he is got perfectly out of Danger, he can scarce persuade himself, but that he is still in the midst of it——

—— With tim'rous Awe,
From the dire Scene th' exempted two withdraw,
Scarce sure of life, look round, and trembling move
(a) To the bright altars of Protector Jove.

All these are Points which lie in common between Painting and Poetry; I would willingly touch upon one thing more under the same View: I mean, those pieces in Poetry, which answer Copying in Painting; and each of which is really *the Picture of a Picture*.

You will give me leave by *Picture* here to understand any Artificial Images of things; from Embroidery, Embossing, or any other Method of expressing Nature by Likenesses of Art; And indeed 'tis of this kind, that all the Pictures spoken of in *Homer* are; and, I believe, all in *Virgil*. At least, what we call Painting now, was not the Painting of the *Homerick* Ages.

It is to the Honour of the Art, (in this general Sense) that the Poets, when they are copying from Painting, gene-

(a) *Od.* 22, 417, — 284.

rally exceed themselves. I believe there is not a more masterly Piece in all *Virgil's* Works, than his Copy of *Troilus*. Thus the same Hand in the Images of *Aeneas's* Shield: As in that of *Achilles*, *Homer* has all the Life and Expression that Poetry is capable of.

In both of these, the Poets use a way of speaking in relation to Picture, which is very strong and emphatical; and which may shew the high Notions they entertain'd of this Art. They do not say, that the Images *seem* to perform such Actions; but talk of 'em as *real* Life. They say directly, that they Move, and Act, and Speak. The Criticks, who have blam'd some Boldnesses of this kind, shew only their own (a) Coldness, and want of Taste. 'Tis a Figure as just, as it is daring: it animates the Description; and where the Poet is (b) more cautious, he is less lively on that very Account.

(a) See *Pope* and *Dacier* on the Shield of *Achilles*.
ll. Book 18

(b) Thus where *Europa* is said

Terras spectare relietas,

Et comites clamare suas, tactumque vereri
Assilientis aquæ, timidæque reducere plantas:

One should forget it was only in *Picture*, did not the Poet take so much pains to inform us of it;

Ipse videbatur terras, &c. —

— *Verum taurum, freta vera putares.* Met. 6, 107.

My want of Skill, in this noble Art, is the same disadvantage in viewing these *Poetical Pictures*, as want of a proper Light would be to the *Real*; but with all this disadvantage, they seem extremely beautiful: And I cannot resist the Temptation of setting one or two of 'em before you.

The Design on the *Shields* affords such a variety of Images exquisitely well wrought, and dispos'd so justly, that it would be perfectly *Gothick* and *Barbarous* to take them to pieces. Ignorant as I am; the (a) young *Romulus*, and *Remus*, and (b) the *Genius* of the *Nile*, strike me particularly in the one; and in the other, the (c) *Ambuscade* and *Engagement*, the (d) still rural *Prospect*; and (e) the *Dance*, consider'd as a *Poetical Piece* of *Painting*.

To what Perfection must Embroidery have arriv'd in *Homer's Days*, if its Works could equal his Descriptions of them? How full of Life is (f) that Figure in *Ulysses's Robes*? And, I suppose,

(a) See *Æn.* 8, 634.

(b) *Ibid.* 711.

(c) See *Pope's Il.* 18, 595 to 626.

(d) *Ibid.* 677.

(e) *Il.* 18, 683.

(f) *Od.* 19, 268, ——— 231.

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the *Cestus* of *Venus* was of the same Nature, in which was——

——Ev'ry art, and ev'ry charm,
To win the wisest, and the coldest warm:
Fond Love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,
The kind deceit, the still-reviving fire,
Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,
(a) Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes.

Hercules's Belt, and the Description of it in the *Odyssey*, is the Reverse of this. The Belt itself, perhaps, was of a different make, answerable to the Shield of *Achilles*; which, by the way, may intimate something of an Art that is now lost, which (if you will allow me in a mere Conjecture of my own) seems to have been a sort of *Mosaick work of different Metals*; (b) Brass, Stannum, Silver, &c. intermixt with Gold; (c) all varied, and (d) shaded, so as to express the different Properties and Actions of the things describ'd: But whatever the materials were, the Workmanship certainly excell'd them greatly. Any one, to be convinc'd of this, need only turn his Eyes on the *Hercules* in *Hades*, where

(a) *Il.* 14, 252, — 127.

(b) See *Il.* 6, 475.

(c) *Ibid.* 480.

(d) *Ibid.* 549.

Gloomy as night he stands, in a fit to throw
 The aerial arrow from the twanging Bow.
 Around his breast a wondrous Zone is roll'd,
 Where woodland Monsters grin in fretted Gold;
 There sullen Lions sternly seem to roar,
 The Bear to growl, to foam the tusky Boar:
 There War, and Havock, and Destruction stood;
 (a) And vengeful Murder, red with human blood.

These are all Copies: And I have done,
 if you will give me leave only to set
Virgil's Troilus before you; which is cer-
 tainly as fine a Piece as any drawn by
 that great Hand:

—— *Amiffis Troilus armis*
Infelix Puer, atque impar congressus Achilli,
Fertur equis, curruque hæret resupinus inani,
Lora tenens tamen: huic cervixq; comæq; trahuntur
 (b) *Per terram, & versâ pulvis inscribitur hastâ.*

How beautiful does this look in the
 Poem and in the Picture? Yes, the Pain-
 ter and the Poet have one and the same
 Art, or rather one and the same Power of
 Creating.

Aut utramque putabis esse veram,

Aut utramque putabis esse pictam.

I am extremely oblig'd to you (says
Philypsus) for so various a View of these

(a) *Od.* 11, 756, — 608.

(b) *Æn.* 1, 482.

Beauties. Believe me, I have scarce known for some time, whether I was not got into some strange Picture-Gallery, where one meets every Moment with new Subjects of Admiration and Delight. The Misfortune is, you have only led me thorough by the hand, and given me a transient View of them : when I could have dwelt Hours upon admiring each by itself. 'Tis just like some travelling Enjoyment of this kind; when we have been forc'd to run over whole Apartments furnish'd with Pieces by the greatest Masters, too numerous to be observ'd particularly: You have delighted me in haste; and I know not how it is, I find myself pleas'd and dissatisfied at the same time.

I am sure, says *Antiphaus*, I have dealt with you, like the *Connoisseurs*, which a Traveller often meets with in places, where there are the best Collections: Were you left to yourself, you would enjoy a thousand Beauties in them; but I must be plaguing you all the while with pointing out the most particular; though after all, I know only where they stand, whom they were drawn by, and what they represent.

But we forget, *Philypsus*, that we are at present half Travellers in earnest:

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We are from home; and you see the Sun is just setting——No,——interrupted *Philypsus*, we have half an Hour good, at least; and if you have any thing farther on this head, I beg you would favour me with it:——As you please, says *Antiphaus*.——You know, we have hitherto been viewing those Points in which Poetry and Painting agree; there is one Method behind, which Poetry has of impressing its Images, peculiar to itself.——The Poet can imitate the Colours of the Painter; but the Painter can never imitate the Sounds of Poetry: You may *see* the Hero fall in Picture; but in the Poem you *see* him fall, and *hear* the Clang of his Arms.

Yes, *Philypsus*, there is a natural Fiteness in Sounds. Every Passion has its distinct Voice; each Action its proper Turn; and every Motion a particular Sound that may correspond to it.

Only observe the difference in the Sound of these Lines; 'tis as sensible as that of the real Sounds, which they describe: Compare this Couplet of Mr. *Pope*,

(a) Trembling the spectres glide, and plaintive
Thin hollow Screams along the deep descent;

(a) *Od.* 24, 6.

with

with this of the same hand,

———The string let fly,
(a) Twang'd short and sharp, like the shrill Swallow's cry.

Thus we might (b) compare in reading *Virgil* several Descriptions of Rivers: There we have the full course of the *Po*, and the windings of the *Tiber*; the (c) largeness of *Benacus*, the (d) slowness of the *Mincio*, the (e) murmuring of a Brook, and the broken (f) course of a River incumber'd with Men and Arms; in a word, every variety of streams that can be conceiv'd, all imagin'd in the various Numbers and Cadence of his Verse.

In Poetry, the Bow *twangs*; the Arrow (g) *whizzes* through the Air; and (h) the Quiver *rattles* on the Shoulder of the

(a) *Od.* 21, 449, — 411.

(b) *Unde pater Tiberinus, & unde Aniena fluens, Saxosumque sonans Hypanis, Myfufque Caicus.*

Georg. 4, 370.

Or these — *Fluvio Tiberinus ameno Vorticibus rapidis, & multa flavus arena*

In mare prorumpit. Æn. 7, 32. — *Fragofus Dat sonitum faxis, & torto vortice torrens. Æn.* 7, 567.

(c) *Georg.* 2, 160.

(d) *Georg.* 3, 14.

(e) *Georg.* 1, 109.

(f) *Æn.* 1, 103.

(g) *Od.* 21, 461.

(h) *Il.* 1, 64.

Warrior; even the particular difference of the same sort of Actions, is to be distinguish'd in the sound of the Verse; and the Javelin, that (a) *flies impetuous* from *Ulysses*, *linguishes* in the hand of the Suitors. This very Circumstance, as I take it, is beautifully describ'd by the Translator of *Vida*, among several other (b) excellent Images of the same kind.

We do not only meet with a great Variety of these significant Numbers in the *Odysssey*; but are instructed too in the *Methods* of rendering our Numbers proper and significant. Here we are taught how the Poet roughens his Verse to imitate the Subject he is to express. Thus the Note tells us, that his Description of the Sea abounds (c) “with the
“harshett Letter our Language affords.
“It is clogg'd with Monosyllables, that
“the Concourse of the rough Syllables
“might be more quick and close in the
“pronunciation, and the most open and
“sounding Vowel occur in every word.”

On the contrary, a gentle flowing Stream runs as easy and smoothly in the Description: We then hear (d) “nothing
“of those rough Consonants; instead of

(a) *Od.* 22, 292.

(b) See *Pitt's Vida*. p. 108, &c.

(c) See Note on *Od.* 12, 283.

(d) See Note on *Od.* 14, 1.

“ them we meet with several Liquids,
“ and those Liquids are soften’d with a
“ multitude of Vowels.

What a violent and strong Motion does
Homer give to *Sisyphus*’s Stone in its fall?

(a) Ἀδ' τις ἐπεὶ αὖ πέδονδε κυλινδέῃο λάας ἀναιδής.

Whence this Rapidity and Violence
in the Numbers? (b) If we observe them,
we find, that “ There is not one Mono-
“ syllable in the Line, and but two Di-
“ syllables: Ten of the Syllables are
“ short, and not one Spondee in it, ex-
“ cept one that could not be avoided in
“ the close; (which perhaps too may be
of Service towards imaging the stopping
of its Course at last) “ There is no *Hia-*
“ *tus* or Gap between word and word,
“ no Vowels left open to retard the Ce-
“ lerity of it:” and yet, tho’ the Motion
be carried on with such a vehemence, one
seems to see the *bounding* of the Stone, as
well as the *Impetuosity* of its Descent.

I should think, (tho’ the Notes do not
mention any thing of it) that the Trans-
lator expresses this double Image in the
English; when he makes the Stone

(a) *Od.* λ', 597.

(b) See Note on *Od.* 11, 736.

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(a)—Resulting with a bound, [ground-
Thunder impetuous down, and smook along the

At least, in both we may say of the
Verification, as of the Stone it describes;

Ipsa suis viribus ruit.

The opposites to these express a Slow-
ness and Difficulty of Motion; when a
Hero strains

—Some rock's huge weight to throw,
(b) The line too labours; and the words move slow.

Thus is *Sisyphus* describ'd in the former
Picture;

With many a weary step, and many a groan,
(c) Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.

Never was a Translator more just to
his Original: The Observation which
has been made on the *Greek* these Lines
answer, will hit equally with the (d) *En-
glish*: "The Verses are clogg'd with long
" Syllables, and with Vowels open upon
" one another; the very Words are
" heavy, and, as it were, make resistance
" in the pronunciation."

(a) *Od.* 11, 738.

(b) *Mr. Pope's Art of Criticism.*

(c) *Od.* 11, 736, — 594.

(d) See Note on *Od.* 11, 736.

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In the same manner *Virgil* and *Homer* describe the Labour of the Giants, when they endeavour to scale Heaven: (a) *Virgil*, chiefly by the openness of his Vowels; *Homer*, by the resistance of his Syllables, and the pauses of his Lines; and his Translator, by slow Syllables, burthen'd with several Elisions, close upon one another.

The Numbers are thus minutely adapted to the Motions describ'd by these great Masters; and we need not wonder if they observe like Rules in Points of greater concern: such are all Occasions where they speak the Language of the Passions; or endeavour to touch the Soul of the Reader either with Pleasure or Pain.

When *Homer* describes any terrible Object, (b) "He rejects the more flowing and harmonious Vowels, and makes

(a) Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam
 Scilicet, atque Ossæ frondosum involvere Olympum.
Georg. 1, 282. sec. Ed. Ruaei.

Ἀθανάτοισιν ἀπειλήτην, ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ
 Φυλόπιδα σήσεν πολυαῖν πολέμοιο. [Ὅσῳ
 Ὅσῳ ἐπ' Ὀλύμπῳ μέμασαν δέμεν, αὐτὰρ ἐπ'
 Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' ἔραν ἀμείδι εἴη.
Od. λ, 315.

Heav'd on *Olympus* tott'ring *Ossa* stood;
 On *Ossa*, *Pelion* nods. — *Od. 11, 388.*

(b) See Note on *Od. 6, 153.*

"choice of such Mutes and Consonants
 "as load the Syllables:" Then long
 weighty Sounds, and Words of many Syl-
 lables, are proper; and often a design'd
 harshness, unusual pauses, and a broken
 structure in the verse.

But the Lyre must be new tuned, when
 the Subject is agreeable or delightful.
 The Poet then softens every Line (*a*)
 "with Vowels, and the most flowing
 "Semi-vowels: he rejects hard Sounds,
 "and the Collision of rough Words:"
 The Tone of the Verse must be neither
 serious, nor majestick; but rather quali-
 fied by as great a frequency of short
 Syllables, as can well be admitted, with-
 out rendring the Lines weak and effe-
 minate: The Cadence is soft and gentle.
 His Words descend like a kind refresh-
 ing Shower; or like the Snow that melts
 in falling.

The *joyous Versification* admits of more
 sprightly Notes, and a greater Mixture
 (*b*) of Energy and Vigour: sometimes
 she rises even to breaks, and pauses: but
 they must be always, like those in Mu-
 sicks, pauses of Delight; and the Verse
 must spring on again, when it recovers

(*a*) See Note on *Od.* 6, 93.

(*b*) Exulting in Triumph now rise the bold Notes.
 [Mr. Pope's Ode on Musick.
 itself,

itself, without losing any thing of its Exultation and Vivacity.—Unless some (a) afflicting Theme breaks in, and turns our Thoughts away, to dismal Scenes, where sighs and melancholy reign: The Muse, compassionate, speaks all in Tears, and moves with the same (b) slow melancholy Air.

It is scarce to be imagin'd, *Philypsus*, how great the Powers of Sounds are, when adapted to the Subject, and the Passion. For my part, I should think that our very *Bodies* are dispos'd to receive them; that this Frame of ours is like an Instrument ready tun'd; and when the proper Key is touch'd, our Nerves tremble and answer it with a kind of Musical Sympathy. How far this may reach in others, I know not; but as for my particular Make, 'tis strangely susceptible of such Impressions.

(a) As *Virgil* from the glories of *Rome*, to the death of *Marcellus*, *Æn.* 6.

(b) *Quantos ille virum magnam Mavortis ad urbem Campus aget gemitus! vel quæ, Tiberine, videbis Funera, cum tumulum præterlabere recentem!*

Æn. 6, 874.

This *Delay* also fixes the Melancholy on one's Mind; and for the same Reason *Repetition* seems to be particularly useful on these subjects:

— Ut vultum vidit morientis & ora,
Ora modis, *Anchisiades*, pallentia miris;
Ingemuit miserans graviter. — *Æn.* 10, 823.

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After a Period set to Melancholy, I have been surpriz'd to find my Eyes full of Tears: There are some exquisite Lines which I can never read without a certain *Shivering* thorough my Blood, that I cannot exprefs to you: I have felt my Spirits burn within me, upon hearing a Point of War, well wrote; and have been almost ready to start from my Seat at the Poetical Sound of a Trumpet.

This Energy of Sounds, and the great and various Emotions they are capable of raising in our Breasts, may serve partly to excuse those Criticks, who are very particular in laying down Rules, as to this part of Versification; the Ancients, as well as Moderns, have left us whole Treatises upon it: and those who have wrote in a more general way, are very diffusive, when they come to this Part of their Subject. They speak to every the least Circumstance; and Readers, who have never thought over this Point, would be surpriz'd to find the great *Cicero* very industriously settling *Quantities*, and measuring Words fit for such and such a Period. They would wonder, whence he is so peremptory for *Iambicks* on this occasion; and on another, so great a Partizan for *Tribrachs* and *Dactyls*.

Why,

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Why, seriously, says *Philypsus*, I have often thought him quite tedious on these particulars: The Orator, even the Critick, seem'd to be lost sometimes, and nothing but a mere Pedant appear in their room. I admire the force of Numbers (continued he) as much as any one; but when I have been reading the Rules at large in the Criticks, I could not help thinking them too minute and trifling. If a Man must be taken up thus in weighing Syllables, and ranging of Vowels, what Elegance of Language can we expect, or what Life in his Compositions?

What you say (answer'd *Antiphaus*) is what, I believe, most Men think on this Occasion: and were a Poet always to be studying his Rules, such an Objection would be very powerful: But it is with this, which is only the Mechanism of Verse, as it is in the Mechanism of Writing. We must learn to draw the Figure of the Letters, and study how to form the particular Turn of each, before a Man can write down a whole Sentence: By use this knowledge grows familiar: We then write by a (a) sort of

(a) See *Quintil. Instit.* Lib. 10. Cap. 7. Est igitur usus quidam irrationalis, &c. Or Mr. *Locke's Essay*, Lib. 2. Cap. 9. Sect. 9 and 10.

Instinct;

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Instinct; and our Pen runs over each Letter, without our considering distinctly at each, which way we shall direct it. 'Tis much the same in these Arts of Versification. When we have learnt the Force of Letters, and the Powers of Sound; when we know what Syllables are proper to express such a Motion, and what run of Verse hits such particular Images, Use makes the Mind ready in applying what is proper; and the Thought is as nimble in suggesting Words of a suitable Sound, as the Hand is in Motions proper to set down those words on our Paper.

But it will be half a life, perhaps, before the Poet can come to this Readiness — I do not say it is to be acquir'd immediately, answer'd *Antiphaus*, but acquir'd in some Measure it must be, by any one who desires to be a true Poet: In the mean time, a Man may indulge his Vigour, he may compose his Lines with full Spirit, and set them to Musick afterwards: Let a Man write with Flame, if he will but correct at Leisure.

Besides: this is not so difficult to be attain'd, as one would imagine. The fitness of Sounds to things is natural: *Invention* itself will go some way in the Work; and where there is naturally (what

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(what we call) a *Good Ear*, Nature will do the Business almost without the help of Art. I do not speak this in a declamatory way, Good *Philypsus*; I imagine Fact and Experience will go a great way in proving what I say. A Man, who thinks vehemently, will speak swiftly; and when we are on a grave Point, our Words will of themselves be in a great measure flow and weighty. This is yet plainer from the *Invention* of Languages: How many single Words are there in every Tongue, that have been originally cast in a proper Mould, and on the first Heat carried off the Images of things impress'd upon them? I was saying too, that the posture of the Mind at the time of Composing, will assist the turn of the Composition: And is this more absurd in particular Cases, than that the Temper of a People in general should affect their Language in the same manner? Yet has it been often observ'd, that the Dispositions of a People are perceivable in that Turn of Words they chiefly delight in. Thus the *French* Tongue is brisk and voluble: The *Germans* talk in vast Syllables, and perpetual Consonants: *English* is neither too soft, nor too rough; tho' our *Northerly* Situation inclines us rather to the latter: And,

as

as the *Spaniard* is the most haughty of all Nations, their Language is the most Grand; it prides itself in firm Syllables, in a frequency of the fullest Vowel, and the most sonorous Terminations of its Words.

Nature certainly forms us within for fit Sounds: We see every Day, that even Brutes can express their Passions by the *Tone* of their Voice; and is not an intelligent Being as well qualified by Nature to adapt Sounds to his Sentiments?

Indeed they are thus adapted already in a Multitude of Instances; our language abounds with such words; and in many Cases we need only utter our Sentiments in the most common Expressions, to speak with this Significance. What was it that led the first Inventors into this frequency of such words? Was it Art, or the natural Resemblance, and their Obviousness upon that Account? 'Tis in this Light we must understand our Master Critick as to this point, where he calls Nature (a) "The great Original" and Mistress of propriety in the present Case: It is she that leads us to

(a) *Dion. Hal. Περὶ Συνηθείας, 15'.*

" imitate

“ imitate things by Sound; and to express what we conceive, by Words that are turn’d according to those strong Likenesses, which we form in our Minds.”

’Tis plain the Use of Words is arbitrary: we might, if we had a fancy for it, call any thing by any Name: Yet there is something from within, that has influenc’d all Nations so far, as to lead them to descriptive Sounds, in their giving Names to things; and that more frequently than one would readily imagine. What Nature has done in single Words, the Poet carries on in Composition; almost all the particular Names of Sounds themselves, for instance, are naturally significant in most Languages; as with us, the *Roaring* of Waves, the *Whistling* of Winds, &c. Of such Words, assisted by a proper structure of Quantities, and a significant Cadence of Verse, the Poet makes an Hurricane by Land, or a Storm at Sea. Nature first presided in establishing those proper sounds, and still directs in the Assemblage of them.

Hence it is, that this Point takes such a Compass in the Doctrine of the Criticks. Some of them, no doubt, carry the Matter too far, when they would require this natural Significance of Sounds to be kept

kept up in every thing we write. Such was *Vossius*. It would make you smile to hear some of his Fancies: He talks as if every Language, like that of his Favourites the *Chinese*, should be nothing but Musick: He would have our very Actions all Tuned: A Soldier can't run the Gauntlet, but he must be (a) slash'd in Time; and his very (b) Barber must shave him in a just proportion of *Dactyls* and *Spondees*.

Hermogenes is perhaps more trifling, tho' in a graver manner: He questions whether this sort of Sounds be not preferable to the Sentiments in a Poem. This is to oppose two Things, that are in the strictest Amity and Concord. These Sounds do not, like the Modern, pretend to rival the Sense; their whole Business is to make the Sentiments more

(a) The Ancients (says he) us'd Musick in every thing; *Adeo quod ipsa quoque plaga ad numeros harmonicos fontibus ingerebantur.* De Viribus Rythmi; P. 47.

(b) Non semel recordeo me in ejusmodi incidisse manus, qui quorumvis etiam canticorum motus suis imitarentur pectinibus; ita ut nonnunquam Iambos vel Trochæos, alias Dactylos vel Anapæstos, nonnunquam Amphibraches aut Pæonas quàm scitissimè exprimerent; unde haud modica oriebatur delectatio. Ib. P. 62.

strongly

strongly perceiv'd, and more effective on the Mind.

I have heard it frequently objected to those Gentlemen, the Criticks, that they find out several Beauties of this kind in the Works of *Homer*, which he never so much as dream'd of in composing 'em. In many Cases this may be true; and in many the Lines may be justly commend- ed, and really significant, tho' that partic- ular Beauty might not be design'd in composing them: But those who can persuade themselves, that *Homer* never de- sign'd any such thing in his Writings, I should think, might soon bring them- selves to believe, (what has been so fre- quently produc'd as an instance of Ab- surdity) that his Poems might be made by chance.

The Notes of Musick in a good Com- position are fitted to the Subject; and a good Copy of Verses wrote for Musick will be fitted for Notes. I cannot once doubt, that the first Stanza in Mr. *Pope's* Ode for St. *Cecilia's* Day has a design'd Harmony all thorough it. 'Tis just the same Case with *Homer's* Poems: They were all made for Musick, and have been all sung to the Lyre.

As for my part, says *Philypsus*, I find Musick enough in them, even now, with-
out

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out the Lyrist. Neither have I any quarrel with the Criticks for giving me pleasure, and pointing out Beauties of this kind, whether design'd by *Homer* or not. But I wonder at one thing: while they speak of the Defect in this point perpetually, I never yet heard them speak of any Excess in it: 'Tis certain, that the greater Number of Poets err in neglecting the significant Turn of their Verses: but is there no erring too by an Affectation of it?

I thank you, (answer'd *Antiphaus*) for putting me in mind of this particular. Undoubtedly there may be faults on both sides: Even in the Poem before us, I imagine, this is sometimes carried too far, and sometimes used improperly: The Infirmary of a Couplet, mention'd on another Occasion, agrees with the thing describ'd, and may perhaps be blameable on that very Account.

(a) His loose head tott'ring, as with wine oppress'd,
Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast.

Terrible Images have something engaging; and the Mind takes a secret Pleasure even in *Melancholy*: *Disagreeable*

(a) *Od.* 18, 282, — 239.

(a) objects

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(a) objects alone are the worse for being well describ'd: A Poet is to reject, as well as to chuse: 'Tis want of Art to set every thing in a strong Light; and there are many Objects, which, if they must have a place at all, require at least to be flung into Shades.

If this be true, there are some few Images of this sort, which I think are drawn too strongly, or too lavishly:

(b) Down dropt he groaning——

(c) He said: chill horrors shook my shiv'ring
[soul.

(d) They curse their cumbrous pride's unwieldy
[weight.

(e) There wallowing warm, &c.

To me the Screaming of the Ghosts, as describ'd at the end of the *Eleventh* *Odyssey*, is rather *disagreeable* than *dreadful*:

Swarms of Spectres rose from deepest Hell,
With bloodless Visage, and with hideous Yell,
They scream, they shriek; sad groans, and dismal
[sounds,

(f) Stun my scar'd Ears, and pierce Hell's utmost
[bounds.

(a) *Longinus* condemns a Passage in *Hesiod* on this very Account: *De Subl.* Cap. 9.

(b) *Od.* 14, 473, — 425.

(c) *Od.* 4, 725, — 538.

(d) *Od.* 1, 214, — 165.

(e) *Od.* 4, 547, — 405.

(f) *Od.* 11, 782, — 632.

I leave this to your judgment; for it is very difficult, in these Cases, to discern the *True* from the *Faulty*. A *barbness* of Sounds is often proper and significant; but when and how far, is a knot that I will not pretend to untie.

I beg leave to repeat a Passage from the *Iliad*, in which some of the Lines may be strain'd too much, under this notion of rendering them significant:

First march the heavy Mules, securely flow,
O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go:
Jumping, high o'er the shrubs, of the rough ground,
Rattle the clatt'ring cars, and the shockt axles bound.
But when arriv'd at *Ida's* spreading woods,
(Fair *Ida*, water'd with descending floods)
Loud sounds the Axe, redoubling strokes on strokes;
On all sides round the Forest hurls her Oaks;
Headlong deep-echoing groan the thickets brown;
(a) Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder
[down.

This last Verse in particular may be an Instance of employing descriptive Sounds too thick upon one another; but this, if it be a fault, is such an one as in the present state of Poetry, requires an unusual Eminence in the Writer, to be capable of committing it.

(a) *Il.* 23, 147, — 120.

'Tis much more frequent among our Poets to neglect the Sentiments in their Versification; to give up the significant Structure of Words, for mere harmony and softness of Verse; and even to make use of Numbers contrary to the Image or Passion they are describing; tho' to describe Actions of Rapidity, for instance, in slow solemn Measures, is as absurd, as for an Actor to scold, or rant, with the tone and steadiness of a Philosopher.

We have not time, *Philypsus*, otherwise I should have ventur'd on some farther Faults of our Versification: But I must not now run out into Complaints on the frequent *Consonants*, and frequent *Eli-sions*, multiplied so much in our Verses, tho' both ought to be particularly guarded against, in a Language naturally overladen with them:—On the neglect of *Measure*, and taking all Syllables, whether long or short, to be of equal Time; and the Lameness and Inequality from hence in Verses of the same kind:—The discord of the *Emphasis* or Accent, and of the *Pauses*:—the repeated *Cadence*, and continued *Likeness* of Sound. I need only mention some other Identities of Sound, as all middle and double Rhymes, and all that are alike for two Couplets together. And methinks, *Philypsus*, as all these

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these likenesses of Sound would be given up at the first word, unless there be some particular Reason for retaining that fashionable jingle at the close of our Verses, we may even reckon that as bad as the rest. I should have said something on this: but 'tis no great matter; since it stands condemn'd over and over by the greatest Criticks among the Modern. For my part, I'll talk no more of it, that we may go in Humour to our Claret.— I begin to wish myself in your Parlour. The Evening shuts in apace. Come, good *Philypsus*, let us be going, I beseech you.

F I N I S.



A
Am
Amb
Ang
Anti
Anti
Arch
Assim
Assom
Ben
Bom
Boyis
Breaks
Compo
Compr
Concer
Concise
Confusio
Contem
Contran
Contrast
Courage
Critic a

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TO
Mr. SPENCE,
ON HIS
ESSAY
On Mr. POPE's
ODYSSEY.

'TIS done—Restor'd by thy immortal Pen,
The Critic's noble Name revives again;
Once more that *Great*, that *Injur'd* Name we see
Shine forth alike in ADDISON and Thee.

Like Curs, *Our* Critics haunt the Poet's Feast,
And feed on Scraps refus'd by every Guest;
From the old * *Thracian* Dog they learn'd the Way
To snarl in *Want*, and grumble o'er their *Prey*.
As tho' they grudg'd Themselves the Joys they feel,
Vex'd to be charm'd, and pleas'd against their Will.

* *Zoilus*, so call'd by the Ancients.

Such

Such their inverted Taste, that we expect
For Faults their Thanks, for Beauties their Neglect;
So the fell Snake rejects the fragrant *Flow'rs*,
But every *Poyson* of the Field devours.

Like bold *Longinus* of immortal Fame,
You read *Your* Poet with a Poet's Flame;
With *His*, *Your* generous Raptures still aspire;
The *Critic* kindles, when the Bard's on Fire.
But when some lame, some limping *Line* demands
The Friendly Succour of your healing Hands;
The Feather of your Pen drops Balm around,
And plays, and tickles, while it cures the Wound.

While POPE's Immortal Labour we survey,
We stand all dazzled with Excess of Day,
Blind with the glorious Blaze; — to vulgar Sight
'Twas One bright Mass of undistinguish'd Light;
But, like the tow'ring Eagle, *You* alone
Discern'd the *Spots* and *Splendors* of the *Sun*.

To point out Faults, yet never to offend;
To play the *Critic*, yet preserve the *Friend*;
A Life well spent, that never lost a Day;
An easy Spirit, innocently Gay;
A strict Integrity, devoid of Art;
The sweetest Manners, and sincerest Heart;
A Soul, where Depth of *Sense*, and *Fancy* meet;
A *Judgment* brighten'd by the Beams of *Wit*,
Were ever *Yours*; — Be what *You* were before,
Be still Yourself; the World can ask no more.

